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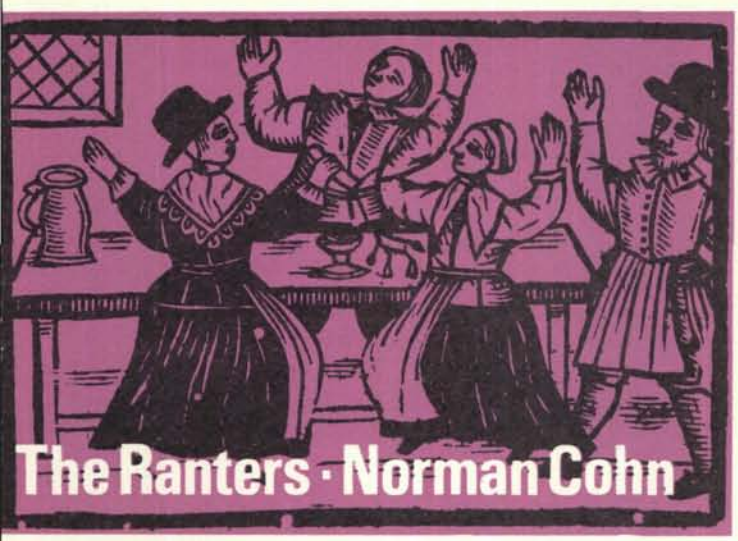

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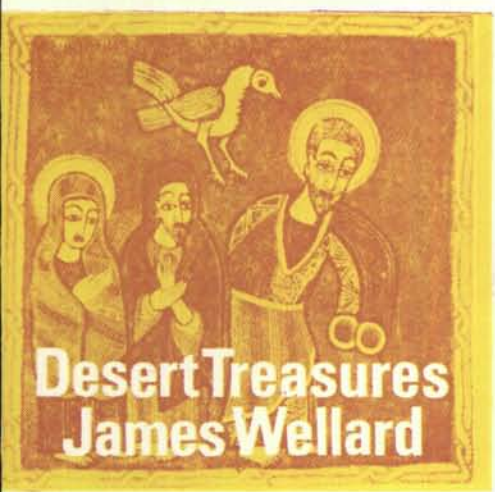

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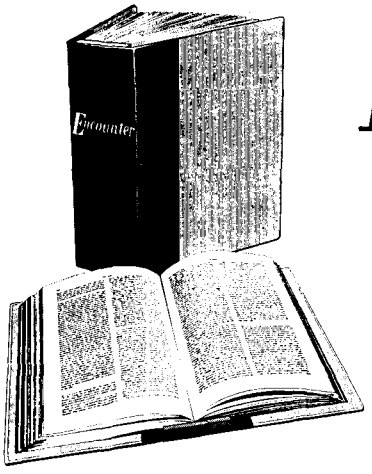

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Anthony Hartley

The Strangled City

Letter from New York

"THERE IS NO DENYING," wrote James Bryce in the 1880s, "that the government of cities is the one conspicuous failure of the United States." Ninety years later, not only would many Americans be inclined to echo his words, but what are called "urban problems" have developed into a large-scale industry where federal and state government, foundations and universities, municipal officials and voluntary organisations vie with each other to produce a flood of research, experiment, moral exhortation or simple cries of alarm.

The latest and most comprehensive Jeremiad comes from the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence: a body established by President Johnson and whose utterances during its existence were distinguished more by a daunting accumulation of irrelevant detail than by any particularly acute analysis—or, indeed, definition—of violence. Its most recent statement, uncompromisingly entitled "*Violent Crime: Homicide, Assault, Rape and Robbery*," paints a gloomy but not unrecognisable picture of the future of American cities. These, it predicts, will come to be divided into central business districts protected during the day by the large numbers of people about and deserted at night; "high-rise apartment buildings and residential compounds protected by private guards and security devices" and inhabited by the rich, and slum areas which will be "places of terror with widespread crime, perhaps entirely out of police control during night time hours." Further out will lie the affluent suburbs where ownership of guns will be "almost universal," "homes will be fortified" and "armed citizens in cars will supplement inadequate police patrols in neighbourhoods closer to the central city." Those who commute to work in the centre will travel along expressways in cars "routinely equipped with unbreakable glass, light armour and other security features." "Armed guards will 'ride shotgun' on all forms of public transportation." Between the safe rich areas and the perilous poor ones there will be not entirely unexpectedly, "intensifying hatred and deepening division."

There is a good deal of the fashionable Terrors of the Year 2000 about all this. Nor are they particularly novel terrors; there is a long short story by H. G. Wells which contains a remarkably similar picture of urban society. But some of the description, at least, is familiar stuff to anyone living in the centre of a big American city. The present article, for instance, is being written from a "high-rise apartment building... protected by private guards and security devices." The *Washington Post* regularly publishes, in type which recalls the births, deaths, and marriages of happier pages, a list of the crimes committed on the previous day in the District of Columbia. A typical daily batch (up to 6 p.m. on 19 November) included 33 armed robberies, 4 burglaries, 3 cases of arson, 1 stabbing and 2 assaults. Since most of these took place in the poorer black sections of the city, it appears fairly clear that, for some inhabitants of the slums at any rate, the city has become an environment as threatening as a neighbouring tract of jungle is for an Indian or African villager. An excellent piece of reporting in the *New York Times* (24/9/69) paints a fearful picture of life in the (largely Puerto Rican) Hunts Point area of the Bronx where the streets are infested by heroin addicts to such an extent that deliveries can no longer be made to the shops since the vans are robbed in broad daylight. Other hazards of inhabiting

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Hunts Point include having the water pipes stolen by addicts desperate for their drug, constant hold-ups and burglaries, and in general a much reduced chance of dying a natural death. In one street a landlord has found a solution to his difficulties by hiring a convicted murderer as the superintendent of his building. The latter, aided by a German shepherd dog and armed with an axe and a machete, has managed to keep his own demesne intact, and his comment to a reporter ("I treat people with respect, and that's why they respect me") shows that, even in Hunts Point, irony can survive. The conclusion of the reporter was that "in basic ways, portions of the Hunts Point section of the south-east Bronx have ceased to be a part of New York City," but, in the light of the presidential Commission's report, it might be thought that the connection was uncomfortably close—that of the skull at the consumers' feast of Fifth Avenue and Madison.

Hunts Point and even Washington are extreme cases, and are, in any case, perhaps no worse than the conditions in the East End of London at the end of the 19th century described in a novel such as Arthur Morrison's *A Child of the Jago*. But their existence explains the pessimism of the Commission on Violence and also why the problem of the inner city has become dramatic over the last few years. Poverty and its various accompanying degradations are one thing—familiar evils, no doubt (though newly discovered under the auspices of Michael Harrington after the prosperous 1950s). A break-down in the administration of cities is quite another, and it is this that is suggested, not only by the dramatic failure of the police to cope with violence in the streets, but also by the deterioration of services, such as street-cleaning and the collection of rubbish. New York, for example, is a city of dog-lovers, and this fact will be nauseatingly brought home to anyone who walks down a wealthy residential street like Sutton Place in summer. The pavements are unwashed and the stench appalling. The contrast between the marble halls of the rich and an increasingly sordid urban environment is symbolic, a glaring example of "public penury, private ostentation" (as C. F. Masterman put it, fifty years before J. K. Galbraith).

IT IS ALSO A CONTRAST which raises some interesting questions about the concepts of "standards of living." Relatively high incomes, the possession of two or more cars, and more refined types of refrigeration—these things can be represented in the statistics, and it is on them that the idea of the United States as a society affluent above all others rests. But the effect of inadequate public services and a failure to combat effectively those ills that modern cities are heir to remains unrecorded and rarely considered. Most Americans know that their great corporations are better run than their European equivalents. Practically none realise that their cities are far worse administered than Paris or London.

IT IS THE GRADUAL realisation that something is very wrong combined with the fact that the racial fault, whose movements threaten seismic disturbance to American society, runs directly through the cities which has led to the present "urban crisis," both aspects of which are conveniently summed up in the flight of well-off white middle-class families to the suburbs and the consequent diminution in the financial resources of the central city. For the gradual expansion from city to conurbation and from conurbation to "megalopolitan area" has not been accompanied by any corresponding change in the antiquated structures of American local government. New York still consists of the Five Boroughs despite the obvious fact that most of its troubles can only be remedied if something is done over a far wider area. And it still has to depend for financial solvency on the rusty machinery of state government operated by men, most of whom are suspected of being unsympathetic to its needs. It is small wonder that the administration of New York looks as if it is losing the struggle with problems that range from motor-cars to muggers or that New Yorkers succumb easily to paranoia when discussing their native town.

New York, indeed, is probably the most spectacular instance of the "urban crisis." It is certainly the most frequently discussed—above all, by New Yorkers. For just as the city itself appears to the foreigner excessive, monstrous even, by turns beautiful and hideous but never less than awe-inspiring, so the difficulty of governing it seems to swell to ever more gigantic dimensions, the more closely it is observed. Mayor John Lindsay's campaign posters before last November's mayoral election declared that his was "the second toughest job in the United States," but, compared to the position of Mayor

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of New York the Presidency seems to have decided advantages—real power for one. It was first noted by Wallace Sayre that no mayor of New York ever goes anywhere from Gracie Mansion, except, on occasion, to jail. The conditions of the office are such as to make it extremely difficult to extract much political credit from it. Mr. Lindsay has been doing his best, but, in an intractable political environment, it is hard to achieve more than merely preventing further deterioration of the city's services. Even this is a task a little like trying to preserve a crumbling dyke against the inroads of the sea. No sooner is one section patched than another begins to disintegrate. For many New Yorkers the most notable improvement effected by the present mayor has been the turning over of Central Park to bicyclists three days a week.

The reasons why it is so difficult to get things done in New York City are diverse, and some of them at least are peculiar to a unique conglomeration of cultures and nationalities. The defensive attitudes of the immigrant are deeply implanted in a population, some 47% of whom in 1960 were either foreign-born or the children of immigrants (this figure should be increased by the 8% Puerto Rican population who are not reckoned as foreigners, but who, for practical purposes, must be included). In the same way, therefore, as the physical landscape of the city is dotted with heavily protected blocks of flats, so the observer of its political, economic, and social contours can identify small fortified stockades of hardly won privilege, frequently arranged according to ethnic patterns and bristling with determination to defend themselves against any intrusion upon their territory. Thus the Italians are said to control the Sanitation Men's Union, the Irish traditionally occupy positions in the police force, and the Jews largely provide the city's schoolteachers. All these *situations acquises* represent a capital only to be abandoned with reluctance in face of the demands of other elements in a shifting population for their own place in the sun of municipal employment. The coincidence of interest groups with ethnic divisions has intensified the competitiveness of the first and focused the consciousness of the second, the only mitigating factor being a long historical habit of competing waves of immigration which causes the efforts at self-improvement of new arrivals to be regarded with understanding, if not invariably sympathy. In this situation any attempt to change the existing structures of administration is a little like shooting a ball on an electric pin-table: lights flash, bells ring, and flippers strike out defensively.

WITHOUT BEARING IN MIND this general background, much of what goes on in New York City becomes incomprehensible. Why, for instance, did the creation of an autonomous school district out of the (largely Negro and Puerto Rican) Ocean Hill-Brownsville area of Brooklyn bring about a strike of the United Federation of Teachers (*UFT*) and unleash a polemical free-for-all in which charges of Negro anti-Semitism were answered with counter accusations of racial discrimination? Why is the phrase "community power" so divisive in terms of New York politics? The fact is that behind events at Ocean Hill-Brownsville, behind the demand for local services locally administered, lurks the much more controversial question of who shall occupy what jobs in what proportion. In its extreme form the choice here is between selection by fitness for posts (which, in the case of the teachers, implies a preponderance of the more intellectually inclined ethnic groups) or selection by a kind of ethnic proportional representation. The demand from the Negro and Puerto Rican inhabitants of slum areas like Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant is naturally that they should receive a proportion of such jobs in line with their numbers.[1] This point of view appears strange to a European accustomed to a municipal bureaucracy appointed according to defined requirements, but it is less so in the United States where there still exists a strong tradition of caring more about who gets a public position than about how he carries out his duties. This is the state of mind cogently expressed by George Washington Plunkitt of Tammany Hall:

> I have good reason for sayin' that most of the Anarchists in this city today are men who ran up against civil service examinations. Isn't it

[1] I have deliberately avoided using the word "ghetto" for the Negro and Puerto Rican slum areas of the cities. As Daniel Moynihan has recently pointed out, "ghetto" suggests a host of false comparisons—among others that of a cohesive and capable community which only has to be released from its present restrictions to make its way in the world without further help. This is certainly not the case of New York's poor. Much more positive steps are required than the simple removal of prejudice.

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> enough to make a man sour on his country when he wants to serve it and won't be allowed unless he answers a lot of fool questions about the number of cubic inches of water in the Atlantic and the quality of sand in the Sahara desert? . . .

Whether this carefree attitude can be reconciled with the business of running a great modern city is another matter. The point is that it is deeply entrenched in the mind of the average New Yorker and, more especially, in the minds of those who concern themselves with politics. *Tous les postes et tout de suite* appears quite a reasonable demand—even a democratic one—and in making it, the Negro community, for instance, is trying to use its political power in precisely the same way as other ethnic groups have used theirs before. The difference is that, since the time of Boss Plunkitt, the administration of the city has become a far more complicated business and that, in poor areas, the Negroes (whose political power is, in any case, probably somewhat less than they at present believe it to be), by putting forward their claims, tend to polarise against them various white ethnic groups united by little else than a common defensive reaction.

THE POSITION OF the Negro in New York City is, indeed, somewhat paradoxical. He suffers from no political or legal disabilities, and, in purely social terms, he is probably better treated than in any other part of the United States. Concern for his welfare is vociferously expressed on all sides, and a crowd of voluntary organisations elbow each other out of the way to present their own version of his needs and the way to satisfy them. The Negro sometimes seems to be what the "urban crisis" and the rediscovery of poverty is about, somewhat to the dismay of the Puerto Ricans who feel that their claims to a slice of whatever cake is going are being overlooked.

On the other hand, the social disintegration within Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant and the rate of unemployment for Negro men suggest that black migrants to New York from the farms of the South have found it a less favourable environment than white immigrants from the farms of (say) Sicily. The New York ladder up which immigrants have traditionally managed to scramble—often by placing their feet firmly on the faces of those just behind them—has not provided invigorating exercise for the Negro. On the contrary, the ethnic rigidities and passionately competitive atmosphere of New York work against any group which lacks the stimulus of the immigrant's acceptance of American capitalist values and is also convinced, not without some historical justification, that its own past has placed Americans morally in its debt. In the recent excellent special number of *The Public Interest* (No. 16) devoted to New York, Nathan Glazer notes how the belief expressed in his and Daniel Moynihan's book *Beyond the Melting Pot* (mostly written in 1960–61) that New York Negroes would behave pretty much as other ethnic groups had done before them had been disappointed. The reason he gives for this disappointment is that polarisation of diverse ethnic groups into White *versus* Black which has been mentioned above. But there are other causes which could have been added. In fact, it is very doubtful whether the traditional "immigrant's way up" is appropriate for native-born Americans lacking the cohesive family ties and the artisan crafts of the new arrivals from Europe. New York is a city highly sympathetic to those capable of pulling themselves up by their hair. It is not at all sympathetic to those who require a helping hand, and it is precisely a helping hand that Negro migrants from the rural South need. One of the major causes of the present economic and social plight of Negroes in the New York slums has been precisely the expectation that they *would* take the same road as the immigrant. How different their situation really is from immigrants is indicated by the general lack of Negro small businesses and Negro savings.[2] Negroes have, in fact, a reasonable claim to special consideration—reasonable, not so much because of past history, as because only special measures can be effective in ending the social disintegration of the slums. But, in New York's mosaic of competing ethnic groups, special treatment for any one section of the population is fiercely resented and resisted by the others, especially

[2] What small Negro businesses there are usually turn out to be owned by West Indians (*i.e.*, immigrants). According to Glazer & Moynihan the income of Chinese from Chinese-owned business in America "is, in proportion to their numbers, *forty-five times* as great as the income of Negroes from Negro-owned businesses. . . ." (*Beyond the Melting Pot*, p. 37.)

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when it may imply poaching on the jealously guarded preserves of jobs or residential areas. What the Negro, no doubt, requires is more help. What the working-class and lower middle-class New Yorker thinks that he requires is more self-help. Behind these opposing positions lie differences of historical experience and psychology which might be reconcilable by priests or philosophers, but respond with difficulty to the exhortations of politicians, however well-intentioned.

IT WAS THE TENSIONS and resentments arising out of these very different perspectives which found expression in last November's mayoral election. Unlike his liberal fellow-candidates in Minneapolis or Los Angeles, Mr. Lindsay won. But the result was hardly a resounding victory for sweetness and light and the leader-writers of the *New York Times*. If the opposition vote had not been split between two candidates, Mr. Lindsay would not have been elected. As it was, he received the lowest proportion of the vote of any mayor elected since 1933. Had the Democratic candidate, Mario Procaccino, been a more reputable figure, the anger of the white working class and of the inhabitants of boroughs other than Manhattan at the Mayor's apparent indifference to their interests might have produced a very different result.

In fact, Mr. Lindsay nearly fell a victim to a certain patrician indifference on his own part towards the frequently illiberal fears and aspirations of the average New Yorker living in areas outside the slums. To quote Boss Plunkitt again, "There's only one way to hold a district: you must study human nature and act accordin'...." During the eighteen months before the election the Mayor often gave the impression of believing that the reactions of the whole city could be judged by those of the Upper East Side of Manhattan. On the other hand, those inhabitants of the Bronx and Queens who were ready to blame him for everything from a rising crime rate to a failure to clear the streets of snow (especially after the great blizzard of February 1969) were making a different sort of mistake. They overestimated Mr. Lindsay's power, failing to take account of the fragmentation of the Mayor's authority through the complicated series of boards and special authorities orginally created to remove specific functions from the grasping hands of New York politicians, but which have subsequently become Frankenstein's monsters going their technocratic way with supreme disregard of a wider public interest. Through a chaos of conflicting jurisdictions loom political figures with little power to initiate any positive measure of improvement, yet possessed of great skill in delaying anything which they conceive to harm their own interests or the interests of their particular constituency. Officially at the controls of the city, the Mayor is constantly condemned to manipulate them without effect when he does not actually see the levers break in his hand.

No doubt, the remedy for this formal lack of power would be skilled political bargaining behind the scenes. The discipline which cannot legally be imposed by the Mayor on the elected officials of the various administrative bodies of New York might be enforced by the head of a party on his inferiors in the party hierarchy. But, as Arnold Beichman has put it in a recent article, "The city's Chief Magistrate lacks power because no party system exists with an interest in transforming his opinions into action." That fulcrum too has been denied to Mr. Lindsay; and, given the extreme fragmentation of interests and opinions within the city, it does not seem very likely that his efforts to create it will be successful. Even the coalition of Negroes and Puerto Ricans which has been the main-stay of his electoral strength in the past may collapse as the struggle for influence between its two constituent groups gets under way.

IT IS THE HOPELESS FRAGMENTATION of New York politics—a dissolution which affects both Democratic and Republican parties—that provides some of the impetus towards "community power." If the city cannot be a political community, it might be argued, why not let its warring elements go their own several ways—governing their own schools and, as far as possible, controlling in their own areas the various services necessary in a large city: police, firemen, and the collection of garbage.... The resulting picture might look somewhat like the London of Chesterton's *Napoleon of Notting Hill*; but it would have the evident advantage of preserving vested interests all round and, in the name of "Black Power," of evading the troublesome question of how Negroes and whites are to share authority in an integrated society. A city of autonomous "communities" would also present an

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attractive prospect of re-establishing the control of the ordinary citizen over the sinister forces of centralised bureaucracy—an ideal always dear to American reformers and expressively phrased by William Kent, an earlier progressive, when he wrote in 1911 that "people must get nearer the grub pile and nearer to their Governmental agencies."

Whether, despite these anticipated advantages, such a mosaic of municipal government could deal with the complexities of one of the most difficult cities to administer in the world is another question. Very probably it could not. But, quite apart from the administrative feasibility of "community power," it might also be asked whether it is really desirable to institutionalise New York's political and ethnic fragmentation. In so far as it concerns the Black *versus* White issue, the point has been made by Irving Kristol and Paul Weaver:

> Let us assume that "community control" has been effected, and then let us imagine what New York City is like. There will be black communities having control over their own services, over all the jobs in the area, over their own local budget, over housing, etc. Next to them, there will be white communities with comparable powers. And now let us ask: *how does a man move from one to the other?* The answer is short and easy: he won't be able to.

At this point the lines of ethnic geography would have become permanent frontiers, and, however advantageous this might be to those on either side of the line concerned with constructing durable political machines, it would represent a final retreat from the concept of a centralised city government having, as one of its major tasks, the levelling up of conditions and services as between the rich and poor quarters and, for that matter, from the ideal of an open society.

In fact, however much lip-service is paid to "community power," there is little likelihood of its being adopted as a system of government for New York City. The State and City governments are unlikely to abolish themselves in favour of the "communities," and the idea would be of somewhat academic interest, if it were not for the fact that it carries in its train so many emotional overtones from the American past. In it can be felt nostalgia for the direct democracy of the New England town and that distrust of "bureaucracy" and "bigness" which has invariably operated to the disadvantage of the institutions of government, while hardly affecting the growth of the giant corporations and interest groups that dominate the economy of the United States. Paradoxically, "public penury and private ostentation" can stem as much from a desire to return to the pristine purity of American democracy (and the consequent refusal to grant discretionary powers to government) as from indifference to social evils.

IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT, so far from "community power" proving to be the salvation of New York and other cities, the way things are likely to go is in the direction of the increased federal powers of intervention in local affairs advocated, amongst others, by the influential President of the Ford Foundation, McGeorge Bundy. Observers of the New York scene confess that few people have any accurate knowledge of what is going on inside a city such as New York, and this fact indicates the need to build up a body of officials experienced in urban problems, having at their disposal some solid statistics on which to base their decisions. The relative lack of success of Federal programmes intended to improve the cities also suggests that some other action is required than the simple provision of money. Money, in any case, is for the moment in short supply. No doubt, it will continue to be so. Even "the richest country in the world" can hardly afford the waste, embezzlement, and low level of actual achievement which have presided over the use of Federal funds in the cities.

IT IS GOING TO BE a difficult business to resuscitate the American city, to draw money back into its centre, to get rid of its slums, to make of its streets thoroughfares along which someone might actually dare to send their children unaccompanied, to give it an administration freed from obsolescent structures. There is little in the way of an urban tradition in America. To "save the cities" means actually creating them with all that this implies. In the race for improvement once it gets under way, New York, I would think, might be more favourably placed than some. Its sheer size, its importance as a financial centre, its position as headquarters of the United Nations, its symbolic quality as the most aggressively urban of all cities, its occasionally poignant beauty even—all these things make

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it probable that, if the city centre is to be saved anywhere, it will be saved on the Hudson. For, just as it is unlikely that Americans can allow Washington, their national capital, to be the scene of constant daily hold-ups and "shoot-outs" in the authentic manner of the Wild West without some strong reaction, so New York, with its filthy streets and teenage heroin addicts, can hardly continue to be a standing reproach to the present system of Americal local government. Something, one feels, one hopes, *must* be done.

And yet the obstacles are tremendous. The 20th-century city has a hard enough time in unravelling the ordinary urban problems: traffic control, sanitary services, air pollution, transport, housing, and so on. When the racial tensions between white and black as well as other ethnic jealousies are superimposed on these, the resulting maze might well defeat any administrator. And in addition to all this, there is the handicap of an antiquated system of local government bedevilled by conflicting jurisdictions and the fragmentation of power—a system devised, so it would seem, only to suffer change slowly. But the present position of New York, its sprawling suburbs in Westchester, Long Island and Connecticut and its (in many ways) stinking neighbours on the New Jersey shore is not such as to be able to wait for the mills of the American constitution to grind out some more logical structure that can actually cope with the problems of a great modern conurbation. For want of this the solution is, no doubt, politics: real political control as opposed to unreal administrative control. But reform in New York City has had the unexpected result of depriving the Mayor of the means of pressure on those below him which he once possessed. "Patronage" in the old sense has disappeared and, with it, the party machines which once used to provide surprisingly efficient transmission belts from the centre to peripheral parts of the city. There are now few signs that Mr. Lindsay is going to be able to establish the kind of rule that Mayor Daley has imposed on Chicago—something that might, in any case, be inappropriate in the more sophisticated atmosphere of New York.

In the last analysis, it is difficult to imagine that New York will not muddle through, but a muddle it will be to the despair of the reformer and his friends among the political scientists. Something will get done, but everything will cost more than it needs to cost both in terms of money and of effort. Some evils will be remedied, and others will be ignored. Industry may well depart, but the IBM cards will go on piling up in the glass towers of Wall Street and Park Avenue. Diplomats at the United Nations will still live in their doubtfully privileged enclave, neglected by the mass of the population and detested by the police for their blithe disregard of parking regulations. The heroin addicts will continue trying to amass the fifty dollars or more a day that they need to buy their drug, and do their thing, and other New Yorkers will walk in fear of what they may do to get it. Mayors will quarrel with Governors, Borough Presidents with Mayors. The ten million inhabitants of the Five Boroughs will go on snapping and snarling at each other, while remaining united in their local conviction (despite evidence to the contrary) that the State of New York is down on them. New York is evidently condemned to continue and perhaps, as one embittered Manhattan liberal said to me, "this serves its citizens right. People, after all, get the city they deserve. . . ."

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John McGahern

Wheels

GREY CONCRETE and steel and glass in the slow raindrip of the morning station, three porters pushing an empty trolley up the platform to a stack of grey mailbags, the loose wheels rattling, and nothing but wait and watch and listen, and I listened to the story they were telling.

"Seven-eights of his grave he'd dug in that place down the country when they went and transferred him up on promotion."

"Took to fishing out beyond Islandbridge, bicycle and ham sandwiches and a flask of tea, till he tried to hang himself from a branch out over the river but the branch went and broke and in he fell roaring for help."

"No use drowning naturally if you'd meant to hang yourself in the first place."

"Think there's any chance they'll have him up for attempted whateveritis?"

"Not nowadays—they'll give him a six-month rest-cure in the Gorman on full pay."

They'd filled the trolley, the smile dying in the eyes as they went past, the loose wheels rattling less under the load, the story too close to the likeness of my own life for comfort but it'd do to please Lightfoot in the pub when I got back.

"Looked at with the mind, life's a joke; and felt, it's a tragedy and we know cursed nothing," he'd said last night over the pints of Guinness.

Flush of tiredness in my face after the drinking, the jug of water by the bed had been no use, rough tongue, dry roof of the mouth, dull ache and throb of the poison along the forehead and on all the nerves, celebrating this excursion home, and always desire in the hot tiredness, the dull search about the platform for vacancy between well-fleshed thighs, may I in my relax-sirs slacks Hackney London plunge into your roomy ripeness and forget present difficulties.

The train drew in. I got a table in the restaurant car facing a priest and a man in his fifties, a weathered face under a hat, the blue Sunday suit limp and creased.

A black woollen scarf inside the priest's gaberdine almost completely concealed the Roman collar. The waiter brought us tea and toast on trays and the priest broke the silence.

"Have you come far?" he asked the hatted man at his side.

"From London, on the nightboat."

"You must work there then," the priest, in an interested politeness, continued.

"I do and fukken all, for the last twenty-eight years, on the buildings."

The man hadn't seen the collar and was unaware of the shock of the swear-word; the priest looked anxiously about the carriage but asked "Is it tough on the buildings?" more to prove he could master the unsocial than out of any politeness now.

"Not if you use your fukken loaf like. You soon get wised-up that nobody'll thank you for making a fukken name for yourself by working. I'm a teaboy." The man was relaxed, ready to hold forth.

"And are you going home on holiday?" the priest changed.

"Not effin likely. I'm going home to bury the brother," he announced importantly.

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"I'm sorry. May he rest in peace," the priest said.

"A release to himself and everybody else, been good for nothing for years."

The priest rose, he'd risked enough.

"If you're ever in London," the man held out his hand, "you'll find me any Sunday morning in the Archway Tavern, in the door of the Public Bar facing the Gents."

The priest thanked him, anxious to be gone, and as he turned to the door the man saw the round collar.

"That was a priest," he murmured as if waiting for the certainty to sink in. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"I got no chance."

"Well I'll be fukken blowed," he slumped.

"He didn't seem to mind too much. I wouldn't worry."

"Still he's a priest, isn't he, you have to draw the line fukken somewhere. I'll go and tell him I'm sorry."

"I wouldn't worry," I said, but he shambled to the door.

"He was all right about it, he said he understood," he informed when he returned after minutes, relief of confession on the old face as he pondered, "Tidy how a body can put his fukken foot in it."

The train had crossed the Shannon, the fields were slowing, I took the suitcase and shook hands with the man.

THE FRONT DOOR was open when I came, and she was on her knees in the hall, scrubbing the brown flagstones.

She must have heard the iron gate under the yew at the road and the steps up the unweeded gravel but she did not stop or look up until I was feet away. All she said was my name, but all the tense emotion of the face, the tears just held back, went into the name, and it was an accusation. "Rose," I answered with her name.

I thought she was going to break, and there was the embarrassment of the waiting silence, the still brush in her hand beside her knees on the wet stone.

"Did you get the letter that I was coming?"

"Your father got a letter," her face hardened, and it was already a hard greying face, the skin stretched tight over the bones, under the grey hair.

"Was it all right to come then?"

She still didn't rise or make any sign for me to enter and when she dipped the brush in the water and started to scrub the stone again I put the suitcase down close to the wall of the house and said "I'll fool around then till he comes," but she didn't answer and I could hear the rasp of the scrubbing brush on the stone till I'd gone the other side of the house.

THEY'D NET-WIRED a corner of the orchard off for her hens, the wild nettles growing coarse and tall out of the bare scratched earth, henshit enriches the clay I'd heard them say.

"Be quiet, trembling between timidity and the edges of violence as the rest of your race, and wait for him to come, life has many hours, it'll end."

The bell without rope or tongue hung from the stone archway where the pear-tree leaned, it used to call the workmen to their meals.

"Why don't you go to night lectures and try for promotion?" Lightfoot had asked, pints on the marble of the Stag's Head.

"I don't want."

"Wouldn't it be better for you to have some say than to have jumped-up jacks all the time ordering you around."

"Drink your drink. They have piped music in the office now. They talk less."

I saw my father come on the tractor, two creamery cans on the trailer, old felt hat on his head, I wondered if the sweat-band stank as it used or if it was rotten now. I watched him take the cans off the trailer, then go inside, body that had started my journey to nowhere.

The suitcase was still against the wall of the house. I left it there, but went in. One place was laid on the table by the window, and she was bent over saucepans.

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"Your father has come from the creamery. He's gone out again but he'll soon be in for his dinner."

"Thanks. It's all right."

As I grow older I use hardly anything other than these formal nothings, a conciliating waiter bowing backwards out of the room.

I took the newspaper, went through the daily calamities that spice the well-being or lighten trouble with news of worse, in the gnawing silence the turning of the pages loud above the sounds of cooking. At last she took the whistle from the nail on the wall, blew three short blasts from the flower-garden.

Clay muffled his boots as he came in, leaving a trail on the washed stone. I stood but he turned past me to the table as if he hadn't seen.

"Is the dinner ready, Rose?"

"In a second, Jim."

He drummed an idle rhythm with the bone of the knife on the cloth until she put the plate before him, fried eggs and bacon, a yellow well of butter in the middle of the creamed potatoes.

"There, Jim."

"Thanks, Rose."

The knife and fork rang often on the plate to break the aggressive sucking and swallowing of the food but he said nothing.

"I came on the train," I offered, and had to smile at how foolishly it hung in the silence till he took his hat with the flourish of a man-in-a-hurry, the sweat-band still apparently intact, and went in the direction of the timber-stack.

When he'd gone she put my plate on the table, "There's some dinner."

"Why didn't he speak? Does he not want me in the house?" I asked quietly as I ate.

She was stirring a mixture of meal and skim milk in a bucket for the calf with a stick.

"Do you know, Rose?" I'd to ask again.

"It's not my place to interfere, it'll only drag more trouble into it."

"Well I'll ask him myself then."

"What do you want to go and upset him for?" her voice was sharp.

"No, I can't stay here without knowing whether he wants me or not, the place is his."

"If you let it go today it'll calm down and tomorrow it'll be as if nothing had happened," she reasoned in her care but I could feel the hatred, the disappointment and pain had hardened with the years, but she could mask them better now.

In the confidence of her first days in the house she'd taken down the brown studio photo of the old wedding *Warner Artist Grafton Street,* replacing it with the confetti strewn black-and-white of her own, the sensible blue costume in place of the long white dress to silver shoes, she'd been too old for white.

Against her hopes, too old for children too, the small first communion and the confirmation photos stayed on the sideboard, replaced by no other, only disappearing when the youngest left and they were alone.

All remembered her near madness in the middle of her months as she felt the last years slip.

"Do I disgust you so much that you'll no longer touch me?" waking the sleeping house.

"For Chrisake don't you know there's children listening. I'm tired and shut up and let me get to sleep."

"You should have stuck with your children to the grave."

The noise of the blow came, and she escaping to the fields, losing herself between the tree trunks till she'd grown cold and came in to sit numbly in a chair over the raked fire till morning. Perhaps she'd hoped he'd come, but he hadn't, stiff with anger at the shouted insult to his maleness, more bitter since it echoed his own bitterness at growing old. The next day he'd dug the potatoes where the sheets hung on the line between two trees above the ridge, scattering clay on the sheets she'd scrubbed white for hours on the wooden scrubbing-board.

It'd been years ago, and now they were alone, and he was her child and everything

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now. I could understand her care and hatred, whatever good that was since they seemed to come to the one thing, but it was getting late, and I didn't want to stay.

I FOUND HIM splitting lengths of beech beside the useless pier he'd built to absorb the glass about the house, dangerous with jagged bits. He held the length steady with his boot against the pier while he drove the wedge into the timber. I waited until it split, and the wedge fell loose.

"Can I speak to you?"

As he turned to put another length of beech into position, I said, "If you don't answer I'll just leave."

"Well, I'm not in America as you can no doubt see," he suddenly turned.

"I can't understand why you've not spoken to me since I came."

"You're joking surely. Do you mean to tell me that you don't know why."

"I don't know. I'd not ask you if I knew."

"You mean to say you know nothing about that letter you wrote in the spring?" he accused, the voice breaking under the whole day's resentment, starting to sob. "I had to wait till near the end of my days for a right kick in the teeth."

There was the treacherous drag to enter the emotion, and share and touch, the white lengths of beechwood about his boots and the veins swollen dark on the back of the old hands holding the sledge. With his sleeve he wiped away tears, as a child.

"The one important thing I ever asked you couldn't even be bothered," he accused.

"That's not true. When you wrote you wanted to move to Dublin I went round the auctioneers, sent you lists, looked at places."

"And you said if I did get a place and moved that you wanted no room in it."

"I want to live on my own, I didn't want you to come thinking differently."

"I didn't come under illusions. You took good care of that," he accused bitterly. "And I was foolish enough to think there might be more than pure selfishness."

I knew the wheel: fathers become children to their sons who repay the care they got when they were young, and on the edge of dying the fathers become young again, but the luck of a death and a second marriage had released me from the last breaking on this ritual wheel.

"You are married," I said, it was a washing of hands.

"Yes, I'm married," he said in a bitterness, close to regret. "What's that got to do with it?"

"What did she think of you leaving?"

"She'd be hardly likely to stay here on her own if I went," he resented the question.

"It's your life and her life, for me to enter it would be simple intrusion, and I don't want it, in the long run it'd cause trouble for everybody."

I could hear the measured falseness of my own voice, making respectable with the semblance of reason what I wanted anyhow.

"I'd give anything to get out of this dump," he changed.

"It's quiet and beautiful," the same hollowness came, I was escaping, soothing the conscience as the music did the office.

"Quiet as a graveyard," he took up. "And stare at beauty every day and it'll turn sicker than stray vomit. The barracks shut now, a squad car in its place. Sometimes children come to the door with raffle tickets, that's all. But there's plenty of funerals, so busy Mrs. McGreevy's coffin last month came out roped on the roof of the bread van, and the way they talked about her was certain proof if proof was needed that nobody seriously believes in an after-life. They were sure they'd never hear the edge of her tongue again either in hell or heaven or the duck-arsed inbetween. I'd give anything to get out," he said with passion.

There was silence but it was easier after he'd spoken. Then he asked, "Are you down for long?"

"I'll stay till tomorrow if it's all right."

"That's about as long as you can stand us I suppose."

"It's not that. I have to be at work."

I helped him gather the tools.

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"I think Rose is giving you your old room. I want to get the last things done before night."

"I've left your case in your old room, the bed is aired," she said when I came in.

"There's no trouble any more but I have to go tomorrow, it's to be back at the office," I explained.

"The next time you must come for longer," it was easy in the lies that give us room.

"I'll do that and thank you."

Quietly the dark came, the last tasks hurried, a shift of hens on the roost of the henhouse before the bolting of the door; and inside the lamp was lit and he said, "That's another day put down," as he took off his boots and socks, reek of feet and sweat as he draped socks over the boots on the floor.

"Rose, the corns were tormenting me no end today. Any chance you'd give them a scrape with the razor?"

"You better soak them first," she answered.

She placed a basin of steaming water by his chair on the floor, the water yellowing when she added dettol. She moved the lamp closer.

He sat there, her huge old child, soaking his feet in water, protesting as a child. "It's scalding, Rose," and she laughing back, "Go on, don't be afraid." And when she knelt on the floor, her grey hair falling low, and dried the feet that dripped above the lighted water I was able to go out without being noticed as she opened the bright razor.

CATTLE AND A BROWN HORSE and sheep grazed on the side of the hill across the track, the sun came and went behind white cloud, and as it did the gravel shone white or dulled on the platform.

"The train won't go without you unless I tell it," the one official said to an anxious passenger pressing him to open the ticket office and went on stacking boxes on the gravel where the goods van would come in. When he did open the office and sold tickets there was still time left and the scrape of feet changing position on the gravel grew more frequent.

I had no hangover and no relax-sirs desire and as much reason to go back as come. I'd have hangover and desire in the morning and as much reason then as now. I was meeting Lightfoot in the bar beside the station and would answer "How did it go?" with how it went, repetition of a life in the shape of a story that had as much reason to go on as stop.

I walked through the open carriages. There was nobody I knew. Through the windows the fields of stone walls, blue roofs of Carrick, Shannon river. Sing for them once First Communion Day *O River Shannon flowing and a fourleaved shamrock growing* silver medal on the blue suit and white ankle socks in new shoes. The farther flows the river the muddier the water: the light was brighter on its upper reaches. Rustle of the boat through the bullrushes as we went to Moran's well for springwater in dry summers, cool of watercress and bitterness of the wild cherries shaken out of the white-thorn hedge, black bullrush seed floating in the gallons on the floorboards, all the vivid sections of the wheel we watched so slowly turn, impatient for the rich whole that never came but that all the preparations promised.

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Norman Cohn

The Ranters

The "Underground" in the England of 1650

EVEN BY *the gaudy standard of California it was a grotesquely memorable crime. And the most fascinating element of it was Charles Manson himself, a silken-voiced nouveau guru with an Old Testament beard, the eyes of Rasputin and a line of mystic patter that mixed the Beatles with scientology.... His "Family" turned on with marijuana and LSD regularly. On top of that Manson piled a baffling but effective mix of Beatles lyrics and mysticism, explaining to his flock—with chilling prescience —that the Beatles' "Revolution 9" really was a reference to the Book of Revelation, Chapter 9, Verse 21: "Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts...."*

NEWSWEEK, 15 December 1969

THROUGHOUT the later Middle Ages western Europe contained a substantial body of religious dissenters. Most of the forms of dissent, or heresy, have been fully explored, but one remains mysterious. From the thirteenth century onwards there are countless references, in ecclesiastical writings of all sorts, to heretical mystics who believed that they were so wholly united with God that they were incapable of sinning. Some of these people were said to draw the conclusion that all things were permitted to them—sexual promiscuity above all, but also lying, stealing, even murder. It was also said that some of them denounced private property, on the grounds that God had created all things to be held in common. Labelled as "Brethren of the Free Spirit" or "Spiritual Libertines," these mystics have remained something of a riddle, even after generations of research. We know what their enemies and critics said of them—and their enemies included not only popes, bishops, scholastics, inquisitors and orthodox mystics but also, in due course, Calvin. We are less certain as to what they said themselves. None of their writings discovered so far really presents a picture of a sect of mystical anarchists.

The gap can be filled if we turn to 17th-century England, and especially to the period between the execution of Charles I in 1649 and the establishment of Cromwell's Protectorate in 1653. It was a time of intense religious excitement, of ecstasies and visions and millenarian expectations, when thousands—particularly among the urban artisans—waited daily for Christ to return and set up a Kingdom of the Saints on English soil. Among the competing denominations and sects there is one that does show all the features that in earlier centuries had been attributed to the adepts of the Free Spirit. This is the sect variously known as "the high attainers," "the high professors," or (more popularly) the Ranters. These people were indeed mystical anarchists, and they startled their contemporaries both by their extremism and their numbers. "They never came up so thick as in these latter times," says a pamphlet of 1651. "They were wont to peep up by one and one, but now they sprout out by huddles and clusters (like locusts out of the bottomlesse pit). They now come thronging upon us in swarmes, as the Caterpillers of Aegypt."[1]

THIS ARTICLE *is based on research material which Professor Norman Cohn has included in his forthcoming substantially revised edition of "The Pursuit of the Millennium," first published in 1957, and now to be reissued by Maurice Temple Smith and Paladin Books (London) and Oxford University Press (New York).*

[1] John Taylor, *Ranters of both Sexes ... taken and imprisoned ...* (1651), p. 4.

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At its height Ranterism engaged the attention of Parliament. On 14 June 1650 the Rump appointed a committee "to consider of a Way for Suppression of the obscene, licentious and impious Practices, used by Persons, under Pretence of Liberty, Religion, or otherwise." A week later the committee reported on "the several abominable Practices of a Sect called Ranters," and was instructed to prepare a Bill "for suppressing and punishing these abominable Opinions and Practices." The resulting Bill was passed on 9 August. Through the legal phraseology the true nature of Ranterism emerges clearly enough:

> ... finding to their grief and astonishment, that there are divers men and women who have lately discovered themselves to be most monstrous in their Opinions, and loose in all wicked and abominable Practices hereafter mentioned, not onely to the notorious corrupting and disordering, but even to the dissolution of all Humane Society, who do deny the necessity of Civil and Moral Righteousness among Men; The Parliament ... Enact and Ordain. ... That all and every person and persons (not distempered with sickness, or distracted in brain) who shall presume avowedly in words to profess, or shall by writing proceed to affirm and maintain him or her self, or any other meer Creature, to be very God, or to be Infinite or Almighty, or that the true God, or the Eternal Majesty dwells in the Creature and no where else; or whosoever shall deny the Holiness and Righteousness of God, or shall presume as aforesaid to profess, That Unrighteousness in persons, or the acts of Uncleanness, Prophane Swearing, Drunkenness, and the like Filthiness and Brutishness, are not unholy and forbidden in the Word of God, or that these acts in any person, or the persons for committing them, are approved of by God, or that such acts, or such persons in those things are like unto God: or that the acts of Murther, Adultery, Incest, Fornication, Uncleanness, Sodomy, Drunkenness, filthy and lascivious Speaking, are not things in themselves shameful, wicked, sinful, impious, abominable and detestable in any person, or to be practised or done by any person or persons: Or shall as aforesaid profess, That the acts of Adultery, Drunkenness, Swearing and the like open wickedness, are in their own nature as Holy and Righteous as the Duties of Prayer, Preaching or giving of Thanks to God: Or whosoever shall avowedly as aforesaid profess, That whatsoever is acted by them (whether Whoredom, Adultery, Drunkenness or the like open Wickedness) may be committed without sin; or that such men and women are most perfect, or like to God or Eternity, which do commit the greatest Sins with least remorse or sense; or that there is no such thing really and truly as Unrighteousness, Unholiness or Sin, but as man or woman judgeth thereof; or that there is neither Heaven nor Hell, neither Salvation nor Damnation, or that those are one and the same

THE RANTERS *as imagined by their contemporaries. This crude but curious woodcut seems to show that smoking ranked alongside 'free love' as an expression of antinomianism.*

FROM *The Readers Declaration (1650)*

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> thing, and that there is not any distinction or difference truly between them: All and every persons so avowedly professing, maintaining or publishing as aforesaid, the aforesaid Atheistical, Blasphemous or Execrable Opinions, or any of them, shall be... committed to Prison or to the House of Correction, for the space of six moneths....

The Act also defines the punishment for a second offence as banishment; and the punishment for refusing to accept banishment, or for returning from banishment without special Licence of Parliament, as death.[2]

HOSTILE OBSERVERS tended to confuse Quakers with Ranters, and it is easy to see why. Both Quakers and Ranters were strange new sects; both discarded the outward forms of religion, what mattered for both was the "indwelling spirit." But the Quakers themselves saw matters very differently. In 1649 the founder of the Quakers, George Fox, was thrown into prison at Coventry and found himself in company with some Ranters.

> When I came into the jail, where the prisoners were [Fox writes] a great power of darkness struck at me, and I sat still, having my spirit gathered into the love of God. At last these prisoners began to rant, and vapour, and blaspheme, at which my soul was greatly grieved. They said they were God; but that we could not bear such things.... Then seeing they said they were God, I asked them, if they knew whether it would rain tomorrow? they said they could not tell. I told them, God could tell.... After I had reproved them for their blasphemous expressions, I went away; for I perceived they were Ranters.[3]

The Quakers were much concerned to convert Ranters, and by and large they succeeded. At a joint meeting of Baptists, Quakers, and Ranters at Swannington in Leicestershire there was a dramatic confrontation. Fox found that the Ranters "were very rude, and stirred up the rude people against us. We sent to the Ranters to come forth, and try their God. Abundance of them came, who were very rude, and sung, and whistled, and danced; but the Lord's power so confounded them, that many of them came to be convinced." At a similar meeting at Reading, and later in prison at Charing Cross, Fox was again able to reduce Ranters to confusion. Some contemporaries believed that only the Quakers could possibly have mastered Ranterism. In 1652 Fox was gratified to hear from a magistrate that but for the Society of Friends "the nation had been overrun with Ranterism, and all the justices in the nation could not have stopped it with all their laws."[4] It is a fact that many Ranters became Quakers. As the Quaker movement grew the Ranter movement shrank, until by the end of the Protectorate it had almost faded away.

Not unlike today's student radicals, the Ranters became a topic for instant history, analysis, and gossip. In 1650–51 a whole pamphlet literature sprang up around them; and the views it expressed ranged from the solemn dismay of John Holland's *Smoke of the Bottomlesse Pit or, A More true and fuller Discovery of the Doctrine of those men which call themselves Ranters* to the jocularity of Samuel Sheppard's comedy *The Joviall Crew, or, The Devill turn'd Ranter: Being a Character of the roaring Ranters of these times*. But a few Ranters also wrote about themselves, intimately and vividly; and though most of their works were ordered to be burned, stray copies have survived. They open a window on to one of the queerest of all the varieties of religious experience.

JOSEPH SALMON, one of the Ranters whom George Fox found in the prison at Coventry in 1649, was a writer of real poetic power. His Ranter tract, *Divinity anatomised*, is lost; but some idea of its contents can be derived from the recantation which he published in 1651, under the title *Heights in Depths and Depths in Heights, or Truth no less Secretly than Sweetly sparkling out of its Glory from under a Cloud of Obloquie*. This is how he describes the experience of plunging into, and emerging from, Ranterism:

> Being thus clouded from the presence of the Lord, I was violently posted through most dark paths, where I ever and anon stumbled and fell into the snare of open error and profaneness, led and hurried, (by what power let the wise judg) in a principle of mad Zeal, to tear and rend the very appearances of God, which I had formerly cherished in my brest.
>
> Delighting my selfe in nothing but in that which rendred me most vile and ugly in the sight of all men, and glorying in nought, but my own shame....
>
> I was indeed full sick of wrath, a vial of wrath was given me to drink....

[2] H. Scobell, *A collection of Acts and Ordinances* ... (1658), part II, pp. 124–6.
[3] George Fox, *Journal* (1902), vol. I, pp. 47–48.
[4] Fox, *Journal*, pp. 199, 95.

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Well—drink I must, but mark the riddle.

'Twas given me, that I might drink, I drank, that I might stumble, I stumbled, that I might fall; I fell, and through my fall was made happy.

It is strange to think, how the hidden and secret presence of God in me, did silently rejoyce while flesh was thus manifested;

I had a sweet rest and refuge in the Lord, even while my flesh was frying and scorching in the flames of ireful fury.

I was ark'd up in the eternal bosome, while the flesh was tumbling in the foaming surges of its vanity: . . . .

. . . . and this I know is a riddle to many, which none but the true Nazarite can expound; and til he is pleased to unfold it, it pleases me it should lie dark.

But to conclude—

Thus have I been forc't into the strange paths of obscurity, driven up and down in a tempestuous storm of wrath, and split upon the rocks of dreadful astonishment; All the waves and billows of the Almighty have gone over me.

I am now at rest in the silent deeps of eternity, sunk into the abyss of silence, and (having shot this perilous gulf) am safely arrived into the bosome of love; the land of rest.

I sometimes hear from the world, which I have now forsaken; I see its Diurnals are fraught with the tydings of the same clamor, strife, and contention, which abounded in it when I left it; I give it the hearing, and that's all. . . .

My great desire (and that wherein I most delight) is to see and say nothing.

I have run round the world of variety, and am now centered in eternity; that is the womb out of which I was taken, and to which my desires are now reduced. . . .

Every thing beares a constant and greedy motion towards the center; and when once we are wearied of the prolixity of variety, wee resolve into silence, where we are as if we had never been. . . .

God is one simple, single, uncompounded glory: nothing lives in him or flows from him, but what is his pure individual self.

Unity is the Father, the Author and begetter of all things; or (if you will) the Grandmother in whose intrinsecal womb, variety lies occult, till time orderly brings it forth. . . .

Clearly Salmon was a mystic both while he was a Ranter and after he ceased to be one. As a Ranter, he had performed frenzied and blasphemous acts; but even then he had remained inwardly untouched. And the belief at which he finally arrived was the belief of the Ranters also. For they too held that variety is contained in unity; and that all things flow from, or are contained in, one single womb-like centre, which is God.

If Joseph Salmon represents Ranterism at its most refined, Laurence Clarkson (or Claxton) represents it at its crudest. He came from Preston, where he was born in 1615. As a young man he showed Puritan leanings; being particularly shocked by dancing on the Sabbath. He passed through one denomination after another, from Presbyterianism to Anabaptism and thence to the vaguely mystical tendency known as the Seekers. Sometimes he lived as an itinerant preacher, sometimes he had a parish; but, as he remarks, "not being a University man, was very often turned out of employment." Constantly in financial straits, he became a preacher with an Army regiment, then tried in vain to find a parish in London; until, in 1649, he became a Ranter. As such he soon made his mark. He became the leader of a licentious group called "My One Flesh"; and the committee of Parliament which investigated Ranterism was particularly shocked by his "impious and blasphemous book," *A Single Eye*. In 1650 this book was publicly burned, and Clarkson was imprisoned for a month. It was the end of his career as a Ranter. On his release he practised as an astrologer; later he became a member of the ultra-ascetic sect of Muggletonians.

Clarkson's Ranter tract is a manifesto of mystical amoralism, which justifies all the charges listed in the Act of Parliament. Its full title is *A Single Eye All Light, no Darkness; or Light and Darkness One. . . . This revealed in L.C.* [*i.e.*, Laurence Clarkson] *one of the* UNIVERSALITY. *Imprinted at London, in the year that the* POWERS *of Heaven and Earth Was, Is and Shall be Shaken, yea Damned, till they be no more for* EVER. And that summarises its argument nicely. Time has reached its consummation, the Millennium is about to dawn—and the essence of that Millennium lies beyond good and evil. God and the Devil are to be overthrown by "the King of Glory," "his Majesty," the "Infinite Being" that knows no distinction between light and darkness or between virtue and sin:

> . . . So that rare it is to find the Creature that is awaked out of his deep sleep, that hath shaked off the covering, so that he can from the clear Appearance of God say, the vail is taken away, and that he believeth the Truth as it is in his Majesty. . . .
>
> . . . if Reason were admitted, and thereby Scripture interpreted, then should they observe

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in [*sic*] that Act they call Honesty, to be Adultry, and that Act so called Adultry, to have as much honesty as the other, for with God they are but one, and that one Act holy, just, and good as God; This to me by Reason is confirmed, and by Scripture declared, *That to the pure all things are pure*: So that for my part I know nothing unclean to me, no more than it is of it self, and therfore that Act soever I do, is acted by that Majesty in me.... So that I weigh not how I am judged, in that I judge not my self. So to conclude, the censures of Scripture, Churches, Saints, and Devils, are no more to me than the cuting [*sic*] off of a Dogs neck....

Clarkson denies that any act—even the Crucifixion—can rightly be attributed either to the Devil or to the "wicked inventions" of men: "I must tell you ... that as all Powers are of God, so all acts, of what nature soever are produced by this Power, yea this Power of God: so that all those acts arising from the Power, are as Pure as the Power, and the Power as Pure as God. So from hence it comes, there is no act whatsoever, that is impure in God, or sinful with or before God...."

Sin exists only in so far as conscience and remorse lend it existence:

> ... sin hath its conception only in the imagination; therefore; so long as the act was in God, or nakedly produced by God, it was as holy as God: but after there is an appearance in thee, or apprehension to thee, that this act is good, or that act is evil, then hast thou with *Adam* eat of the forbidden Tree, of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, then hast thou tasted of that fruit, which is not in God.... But to the matter in hand, Thou has heard all acts that are, had their being and birth from God, yea acted by God, to be plain those acts by thee called Swearing, Drunkenness, Adultery, and Theft, &c. These acts simply as acts, were produced by the Power of God, yea, perfected by the Wisdom of God.
>
> What said I, a Swearer, a Drunkard, an Adulterer, a Theef, had these the power and wisdom of God, to Swear, Drink, Whore, and Steal?.... Well Friends, although the appearance of God in me be as terrible to you, as it were to *Moses* in the mount, yet notwithstanding, that what I have seen and heard, I do not in the least tremble, but rejoyce, that I have this opportunity to declare it unto you; however it may be received by you.
>
> .... Consider what act soever, yea though it be the act of Swearing, Drunkennesse, Adultery and Theft; yet these acts simply, yea nakedly, as acts are nothing distinct from the act of Prayer and Prayses. Why dost thou wonder? why art thou angry? they are all one in themselves; no more holynesse, no more puritie in the one then the other.

HELL BROKE LOOSE

or, The Notorious Design of the Wicked Ranters.... (London, 1651)

Moreover Clarkson intended his doctrine to be acted upon: "... not only your Spirit, but your Body must be a living and acceptable Sacrifice; therefore till acted that so called Sin, thou art not delivered from the power of sin...."

WHAT DID all this amount to in practice?

In 1660 Clarkson produced an autobiography called *The Lost sheep found*, which throws much light on how the Ranters really lived. As the word suggests, one sign of a true Ranter was a capacity for eloquent and ecstastic preaching. When Clarkson first met a member of "My One Flesh" the man was suspicious: "he was afraid I came to betray them, but exchanging a few words in the height of my language, he was much affected, and satisfied I was a friend of theirs, so he writ me a Note to Mr. Brush, and the effect thereof was, the bearer hereof is a man of the greatest light I ever yet heard speak, and for ought I know instead of receiving of him you may receive an *Angel*...." Because of his eloquence, his ecstatic mien, his sense that he was indeed filled with God, Clarkson was able to impose his doctrine: "With many more words I affirmed that ... none can be free from sin, till in purity it be acted as no sin ... till you can lie with all women as one woman, and not judge it sin, you can do nothing but sin...."

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The idea caught on: "I had Clients many, that I was not able to answer all desires, yet none knew our actions but ourselves... men and women came from many parts to see my face, and hear my knowledge in these things, being restless till they were made free...." But if sexual promiscuity was the most obvious expression of the Ranters' creed, it was not the only one. "The very notion of my heart," says Clarkson, "was to all manner of theft, cheat, wrong, or injury that privately could be acted, though in tongue I professed the contrary, not considering that I brake the Law in all points (murther excepted) and the ground of this my judgement was, God had made things good, so nothing evil but as man judged it."

Moreover, the doctrine had social implications of a most radical kind: "If the creature had [not] brought this world into propriety [*i.e.*, property], as Mine and Thine, there had been no such title as theft, cheat, or a lie; for the prevention hereof Everard and Gerrard Winstanley did dig up the Commons, that so all might have to live of themselves, then there had been no need of defrauding, but unity one with another." The reference to Winstanley is illuminating. Convinced that the old world was "running up like parchment in the fire, and wearing away," Winstanley had in 1649 set up an anarcho-communistic settlement of "Diggers" near Cobham in Surrey. It was an attempt, inspired by supernatural illuminations, to restore mankind to its "Virgin-state," a primitivist Millennium where private property, class distinctions, and human authority would be unknown. The Ranters shared these ideals. The "Diggers," on the other hand, did not share the Ranters' ideal of moral libertinism, and Winstanley denounced "the Rantering power" as "a devouring beast."

Abiezer Coppe (1619–72) was a close associate of Clarkson. The early lives of the two men were very similar. Like Clarkson, Coppe started as a puritanical young man, much given to fasting, vigils, and self-mortification; and later passed through Presbyterianism and Anabaptism. Moreover, though he went up to Oxford, his career there was interrupted by the Civil War; so that he too had to make his way without the help of a university degree. At thirty he became a Ranter, and the results were startling: "'Twas usual with him," says Wood in *Athenae Oxonienses*,[5] "to preach stark naked many blasphemies and unheard-of Villanies in the Daytime, and in the Night to drink and lye with a Wench, that had been also his hearer, stark naked." Presumably it was for such eccentricities that he was imprisoned for fourteen weeks at Warwick. Later he appeared in London, as a member of "My One Flesh." He was much addicted to drink, and above all he indulged his long-suppressed craving to curse and swear. We hear of him cursing for an hour on end in the pulpit of a London church; the hostess of a tavern was so appalled by his language "that she trembled and quaked for some hours after." Disciples of his were put in the stocks for their swearing.

Once he became a Ranter, Coppe emerged as an idiosyncratic, vigorous, colourful writer—less poetic than Salmon, but far superior to Clarkson. His most noteworthy writings—*A Fiery Flying Roll* and *A Second Fiery Flying Roll*—resulted in his imprisonment, first at Coventry, later at Newgate. Parliament itself was alarmed, and ordered that all copies of these books should be seized by mayors, sheriffs, and justices of the peace throughout the Commonwealth and burnt; copies were also to be publicly burnt at Westminster, the Exchange, and Southwark. The Act of 9 August (which I have quoted above) was largely occasioned by the same works. In 1650 Coppe was examined by a committee of Parliament. During interrogation he behaved most strangely, "throwing nutshells and other things about the room" and talking to himself.

His imprisonment in Newgate lasted a year-and-a-half, and was brought to its close by a formal recantation picturesquely entitled *Copps Return to the wayes of Truth ... and the Wings of the Fiery flying Roll clipt*. Of his Ranting he says:

> The terrible, notable day of the Lord stole upon me unawares, like a thiefe in the night.... And the cup of the Lords right hand, was put into mine hand. And it was filled brim full of intoxicating wine, and I drank it off, even the dregs thereof. Whereupon being mad drunk, I so strangely spake, and acted I knew not what. To the amazement of some. To the sore perplexity of others. And to the great grief of others. And till that cup passed from me, I knew not what I spake or did.

Now that "his Understanding was returned unto him," he begged that the "Wings of the Fiery Flying Roll be clipt... and let it be

[5] Anthony à Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (2nd edition, 1721), Vol. II, pp. 500–2.

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thrown headlong into its own place, the Lake of fire and brimston, and the great Abyss from whence it came."

The intoxicating wine which the Lord offered Coppe, and which produced such singular results, was a visionary experience. In the first *Fiery Flying Roll* Coppe describes it as follows:

> First, all my strength, my forces were utterly routed, my house I dwelt in fired; my father and mother forsook me, the wife of my bosome loathed me, mine old name was rotted, perished; and I was utterly plagued, consumed, damned, rammed, and sunke into nothing, into the bowels of the still Eternity (my mothers wombe) out of which I came naked, and whetherto I returned again naked. And lying a while there, rapt up in silence, at length (the body or outward forme being awake all this while) I heard with my outward eare (to my apprehension) a most terrible thunderclap, and after that a second. And upon the second thunder-clap, which was exceeding terrible, I saw a great body of light, like the light of the Sun, and red as fire in the forme of a drum (as it were) whereupon with exceeding trembling and amazement on the flesh, and with joy unspeakable in the spirit, I clapt my hands, and cryed out, *Amen, Halelujah, Halelujah, Amen*. And so lay trembling, sweating and smoaking (for the space of half an houre) at length with a loud voyce I (inwardly) cryed out, Lord, what wilt thou do with me; my most excellent majesty and eternall glory (in me) answered and sayd, Fear not, I will take thee up into mine everlasting Kingdom. But thou shalt (first) drink a bitter cup, a bitter cup, a bitter cup; whereupon (being filled with exceeding amazement) I was throwne into the belly of hell (and take what you can of it in these expressions, though the matter is beyond expression) I was among all the Devils in hell, even in their most hideous hew.
>
> And under all this terrour, and amazement, there was a little spark of transcendent, transsplendent, unspeakable glory, which survived, and sustained it self, triumphing, exulting, and exalting itself above all the Fiends. And counfounding the very blacknesse of darknesse (you must take it in these tearmes, for it is infinitely beyond expression). Upon this the life was taken out of the body (for a season) and it was thus resembled, as if a man with a great brush dipt in whiting, should with one stroke wipe out, or sweep off a picture upon a wall, &c. after a while, breath and life was returned into the form againe; whereupon I saw various streames of light (in the night) which appeared to the outward eye; and immediately I saw three hearts ... of exceeding brightnesse; and immediately an innumerable company of hearts, filling each corner of the room where I was. I clearely saw distinction, diversity, variety, and as clearly saw all swallowed up into unity. And it hath been my song many times since, within and without, unity, universality, universality, unity, Eternall Majesty, &c. And at this vision, a most strong, glorious voyce uttered these words, *The spirits of just men made perfect*, the spirits &c. with whom I had as absolut, cleare, full communion, and in a two fold more familiar way, then ever I had outwardly with my dearest friends and nearest relations. The visions and revelations of God, and the strong hand of eternal invisible almightinesse, was stretched out upon me, within me, for the space of foure dayes and nights, without intermission.

THERE IS SOMETHING familiar in all this. The deep regression, the sense of returning to a timeless nothingness—the thunderclaps and the glowing light—terror among the demons—the visions symbolising the reconciliation of diversity with an all-embracing unity—these constitute a familiar pattern of mystical or quasi-mystical experience. In our own time similar experiences have been induced in some subjects by psychedelic drugs. But for Coppe the experience means not simply that he has been in contact with God, but that he has been wholly and lastingly absorbed into the divine unity. Even the authorship of the two *Flying Rolls* is ascribed to "his Most Excellent MAJESTY, dwelling in, and shining through AUXILIUM PATRIS, alias, Coppe." And the message which God imparts through Coppe is that in that year of 1649–50 the world is to be reborn into innocence.

Clarkson used the term "Angel" to indicate a true Ranter, and Coppe shows just what this meant: an Angel was a person who had already passed into the new world beyond good and evil and had thereby risen above the normal human condition. And for Coppe, it was the mark of an Angel to be able to curse and swear with a good conscience, and to force others to curse and swear:

> There are Angels (now) come downe from Heaven, in the shapes and formes of men, who are full of the vengeance of the Lord; and are to poure out the plagues of God upon the Earth, and to torment the Inhabitants thereof.
>
> Some of these Angels I have been acquainted withall....
>
> Well! To the pure all things are pure. God hath so cleared cursing, swearing, in some, that that which goes for swearing and cursing in them, is more glorious then praying and preaching in others.

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> And what God hath cleansed, call not thou uncleane.

In psychological terms one could say that an Angel, or Ranter, is a person who tries to undo the socialisation which, like every human being, he has undergone in growing up, and to revert to a truly infantile spontaneity. In a remarkable flash of intuition, Coppe divined as much:

> Give over, give over, or if nothing els will do it, I'l at a time, when thou least of all thinkest of it, make thine own child, the fruit of thy loines, in whom they soul delighted, lie with a whore before thine eyes: That that plaguy holinesse and righteousnesse of thine might be confounded by that base thing. And thou be plagued back again into thy mothers womb, the womb of eternity: That thou maist become a little child, and let the mother *Eternity*, *Almightinesse*, who is universall love, and whose service is perfect freedome, dresse thee, undresse thee, swadle, unswadle, blind, loose, lay thee down, take thee up, &c.
>
> And to such a little child, undressing is as good as dressing, foul cloaths, as good as fair cloaths—he knows no evil, &c.—And shall see evill no more,—but he must first lose all his righteousnesse, every bit of his holinesse, and every crum of Religion, and be plagued, and confounded (by base things) into nothing.

Moreover, the process of regression leads back again to the ecstatic experience of total union with the undifferentiated God, who is also one's self:

> And yet I shew you a more excellent way, when you have past this. In a word, my plaguy, filthy, nasty, holinesse hath been confounded by base things. And then (behold I shew you a mystery, and put forth a riddle to you) by base things, base things so called have been confounded also; and thereby have I been confounded into eternall Majesty, unspeakable glory, my life, my self.
>
> Ther's my riddle, but because neither all the Lords of the Philistins, no nor my Deliliah her self can read it,
>
> I'l read it my self, I'l (only) hint it thus.
>
> Kisses are numbered amongst transgressors—base things—well; by base hellish swearing, and cursing, (as I have accounted it in the time of my fleshly holinesse) and by base impudent kisses (as I then accounted them) my plaguy holinesse hath been confounded, and thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone. . . .
>
> And by, and through these BASE things (as upon the wings of the wind) have I been carried up into the arms of my love, which is invisible peace, and perfect freedome; which can never be glory, eternall Majesty, purity it self, unspotted beauty, even that beauty which maketh all other beauty but meer uglinesse, when set against it, &c.
>
> Which transcendent, unspeakable, unspotted beauty, is my crown and joy, my life and love: and though I have chosen, and cannot be without BASE things, to confound some in mercy, some in judgment, Though also I have concubines without number, which I cannot be without, yet this is my spouse, my love, my dove, my fair one.

RANTERS
FROM: "*Hell Broke Loose. . . .*" (*1651*)

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But for Coppe—and for Clarkson—the rebirth of the world into innocence also implies a radical transformation of society. All distinctions of wealth and status will disappear. Human beings will live in total equality and total community.

> Thus saith the Lord, *I inform you, that I overturn, overturn, overturn.* And as the Bishops, *Charles*, and the Lords, have had their turn, overturn, so your turn shall be next (ye surviving great ones) by what Name or Title soever dignified or distinguished, who ever you are, that oppose me, the Eternall God, who am UNIVERSALL LOVE, and whose service is perfect freedom, and pure Libertinisme. . . .
>
> And now thus saith the Lord:. . . .
>
> Behold, behold, behold, I the eternall God, the Lord of Hosts, who am that mighty Leveller, am comming (yea even at the doores) to Levell in good earnest, to Levell to some purpose, to Levell with a witnesse, to Levell the Hills with the Valleyes, and to lay the Mountaines low.
>
> And the Prime levelling, is laying low the Mountaines, and levelling the Hills in man.
>
> But this is not all.
>
> For this Honour, Nobility, Gentility, Propriety, Superfluity, &c. hath (without contradiction) been the Father of hellish horrid pride, arrogance, haughtinesse, loftinesse, murder, malice, of all manner of wickednesse and impiety; yea the cause of all the blood that ever hath been shed, from the blood of the righteous *Abell*, to the blood of the last Levellers that were shot to death. *And now (as I live saith the Lord) I am come to make inquisition for blood; for murder and pride, &c.*
>
> I see the root of it all. *The Axe is laid to the root of the Tree* (by the Eternal God, *My Self*, saith the Lord) *I will hew it down.* And as I live, I will plague your Honour, Pompe, Greatnesse, Superfluity, and confound it into parity, equality, community; that the neck of horrid pride, murder, malice, and tyranny, &c. may be chopt off at one blow. And that my selfe, the Eternall God, who am Universall Love, may fill the Earth with universall love, universall by humane sword or strength accomplished. . . .

God, in other words, will bring about the egalitarian Millennium not by force of arms but by changing the hearts of men. In a passage which can still arouse sympathy, Coppe demands compassion and recognition for the outcasts of society:

> Thus saith the Lord: Be wise now therefore, O ye Rulers, &c. Be instructed, &c. Kisse the Sunne, &c. Yea, kisse Beggars, Prisoners, warme them, feed them, cloathe them, money them, relieve them, release them, take them into your houses, don't serve them as dogs, without doore, &c.
>
> Owne them, they are flesh of your flesh, your owne brethren, your owne Sisters, every whit as good (and if I should stand in competition with you) in some degrees better then your selves. . . .
>
> Mine eares are filled brim full with cryes of poore prisoners, Newgate, Ludgate cryes (of late) are seldome out of mine eares. Those dolefull cryes, Bread, bread, bread for the Lords sake, pierce mine eares, and heart, I can no longer forebeare.
>
> . . . Loose the bands of wickednesse, undo the heavy burdens, let the oppressed go free, and breake every yoake. Deale thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poore that are cast out (both of houses and Synagogues) to thy house. Cover the naked: Hide not thy self from thine owne flesh, from a creeple, a rogue, a begger, he's thine owne flesh. From a Whoremonger, a thief, &c. he's flesh of thy flesh, and his theft, and whoredome is flesh of thy flesh also, thine owne flesh. Thou maist have ten times more of each within thee, then he that acts outwardly in either, Remember, turn not away thine eyes from thine OWN FLESH.

But in Coppe there is at least as much hatred and exhibitionism as there is compassion. In a sort of one-man demonstration he preludes and illustrates the great reversal:

> And because I am found of those that sought me not.
>
> And because some say, wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou dost so?
>
> Wherefore waving my charging so many Coaches, so many hundreds of men and women of the greater rank, in the open streets, with my hand stretched out, my hat cock't up, staring on them as if I would look thorough them, gnashing with my teeth at some of them and day and night with a huge loud voice proclaiming the day of the Lord throughout London and Southwark, and leaving divers other exploits, &c. It is my good will and pleasure (only) to single out the former story with its Parallels.
>
> (*Viz.*) in clipping, hugging, imbracing, kissing a poore deformed wretch in London, who had no more nose on his face, then I have on the back of my hand, (but only two little holes in the place where the nose uses to stand.)
>
> And no more eyes to be seen then on the back of my hand, and afterwards running back to him in a strange manner, with my money giving it to him, to the joy of some, to the afrightment and wonderment of other Spectators.
>
> As also in falling down flat upon the ground before rogues, beggars, cripples, halt, maimed, blind, &c. kissing the feet of many, rising up againe, and giving them money, &c. Besides that

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notorious businesse with the Gypseys and Gaol-birds (mine own brethren and sisters, flesh of my flesh, and as good as the greatest Lord in England) at the prison in Southwark neer S. *Georges* Church.

Now that which rises up from under all this heap of ashes, will fire both heaven and earth; the one's ashamed, and blushes already, the other reels to and fro, like a drunken man.

BUT ABUSE OF THE RICH and identification with the poor is not enough. The root of the evil is the institution of private property itself. Coppe describes how, riding across an open field, he met a poor cripple in rags. At first he was tempted to give him some part only of the money he had about him, on the grounds that a man must provide first for himself and his own family. But then

the rust of my silver rose up in judgement against me, and consumed my flesh as with fire: . . . that I was fain to cast all I had into the hands of him, whose visage was more marr'd then any mans that I ever saw.

This is a true story, most true in the history.

Its true also in the mystery.

And there are deep ones coucht under it, for its a shadow of various, glorious (though strange) good things to come.

Wel! to return—after I had thrown my rusty canker'd money into the poor wretches hands, I rode away from him, being filled with trembling, joy, and amazement, feeling the sparkles of a great glory arising up from under the ashes.

For the day was at hand when private property would be abolished, wholly and for ever:

(Thus saith the Lord,)

I say (once more) deliver, deliver, my money which thou hast . . . to poor creeples, lazars, yea to rogues, thieves, whores, and cut-purses, who are flesh of thy flesh, and every whit as good as thy self in mine eye, who are ready to starve in plaguy Gaols, and nasty dungeons, or els by my selfe, saith the Lord, I will torment thee day and night, inwardly, or outwardly, or both waies, my little finger shall shortly be heavier on thee, especially on thee thou holy, righteous, religious *Appropriator*, then my loynes were on *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians in time of old; you shall weep and howl for the miseries that are suddenly coming upon you; for your riches are corrupted, &c. and whilst impropriated, appropriated the plague of God is in them.

The plague of God is in your purses, barns, houses, horses, murrain will take your hogs, (O ye fat swine of the earth) who shall shortly go to the knife, and be hung up i'th roof, except—blasting, mill-dew, locusts, caterpillars, yea fire your houses and goods, take your corn and fruit, the moth your garments, and the rot your sheep, did you not see my hand this last year, stretched out?

You did not see.

My hand is stretched out still.

Your gold and silver, though you can't see it, is cankered, the rust of them is a witnesse against you, and suddainly, because by the eternall God, my self, its the dreadful day of Judgment, saith the Lord, shall eat your flesh as it were fire, *Jam.* 5. 1 to 7.

The rust of your silver, I say, shall eat your flesh as it were fire. . . .

. . . give, give, give, give up, give up your houses, horses, goods, gold, Lands, give up, account nothing your own, have ALL THINGS common, or els the plague of God will rot and consume all that you have.

By God, by my self, saith the Lord, its true.

THE RANTERS have been almost wholly forgotten, yet they are entitled to a modest niche in history. Their full significance emerges when they are seen as a link in a long series of mystical or quasi-mystical anarchists extending from the thirteenth century to the present day. Reading between the lines, one can divine from their own writings where their way of viewing the world would have led, if it had been pursued to its logical conclusion. To see these ultimate, extreme implications spelt out one can look either back to the Middle Ages or forward to our own time.

To quote a 14th-century adept of the Free Spirit: "When a man has reached the great and high knowledge, he is no longer bound to observe any law or any command, for he has become one with God. God created all things to serve such a person, and all that God ever created is the property of such a man. . . . He shall take from all creatures as much as his nature desires and craves, and shall have no scruples of conscience about it, for all created things are his property. . . . A man whom all heaven serves, all people and creatures are indeed obliged to serve and obey; and if any disobeys, it alone is guilty."[6]

On the basis of such a world-view it was possible to build up a group of followers who combined blind devotion to their living God with utter callousness towards everyone else. As one

[6] A. Birlinger (ed.), *Ein wunder nützes disputieren* . . . , in *Alemannia* (Bonn, 1875), vol. III, p. 31.

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follower remarked, if his "Christ" ordered it he could murder without committing any sin; for the only sin would be to disobey or deny his "Christ." By making an act of total submission he had "entered the state of primal innocence."[7]

At the end of 1969 a number of male and female hippies were arrested in California on charges of murder. According to press reports, their leader too called himself Jesus, while his "family," consisting chiefly of young women with whom he lived, considered themselves bound to do his bidding without question. They felt that in so doing they were divinely guided, above the law: "We belong to him, not to ourselves." The murdered victims were conspicuously rich people, who were killed in order to "liberate" them from their affluence and also as a protest against a stratified society. Behind all this lay a "philosophy" which regarded all human beings as one undivided whole, at once God and Devil: "There is no good, there is no bad, there is no crime, there is no sin." And this "philosophy" in turn was legitimated in terms of ecstatic experiences, induced in this case by psychedelic drugs.[8]

The idiom of the Ranters belongs to 17th-century England and nowhere else. Their ideas and ideals have a wider relevance.

[7] K. Schmidt, *Nicolaus von Basel* (Vienna, 1866), pp. 66–69.

[8] *Evening News* (London), 2 December, 1969; *The Times* (London), 4, 5, 6, and 8 December, 1969.

Tourist Promotion

For the tourists, who stay in the
Large new tourist hotels, the
Chief tourist attractions are the
Other large new tourist hotels.

For the querulous and wayward
There were once the local monkeys,
Who lived in the ancient tree-tops
Long before the hotels were thought of.
The tourists enticed the monkeys down
From the trees with monkey nuts and
Breakfast rolls. And the monkeys
Scampered across the road and were
Squashed by the buses transporting
Fresh tourists to see the monkeys.
It was not a pretty sight.

So now the tourists are confined to
The tourist hotels, large and new.
They pass with the greatest of ease
From one to the other, escorted by porters
With large new umbrellas, or even through
Underground passages, air-conditioned and
Adorned with murals by local artists,
Conveying impressions of the local scene.
After all, the tourist hotels were created
Specifically for the sake of the tourists.

D. J. Enright

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Sidney Hook

The Ideology of Violence

WARS, it has been said, begin in the minds of men. It is a truth that makes the education of a country, the ideals of its school system and its underlying ideology, not a purely domestic matter but a subject of international concern. It becomes not less true when we acknowledge that the minds of men are moulded by the history, culture, and institutions in which they have developed. The conflicts of interest *in* any given society and *between* different societies will inescapably reflect themselves in the minds of those who live in them.

So long as men remain men conflicts of interest are likely to remain integral to the human condition. That is why the perspective of peace cannot be guaranteed merely by establishing agreement or unity in the minds of men independently of the social institutions in which they have been nurtured. That is why no purely internal transvaluation of values can bring peace in society and among nations of different societies unless accompanied by profound institutional change. Even a common interest in survival, without some institutional means of resolving conflicts among other interests, will not guarantee peace.

One of the perennial illusions of human thought is the supremacy of human thought isolated from its institutional matrix. It expresses itself in myriad ways—sometimes in the belief that a common ideology is a sufficient condition or even a necessary condition of peace. Sometimes the chief weight is placed on a common tradition or a common language on which the hopes for peace hang. Yet we know that some of the fiercest wars have been fought among those who have shared the same fundamental *Weltanschauung*, for example, in the great wars of religion. The greatest military conflict in world history up to that time was waged during the American Civil War between the North and South whose basic traditions and language were common.

On the other hand, we know that nations can and have lived in peace with different ideologies, different traditions, different languages. If world peace depended upon the establishment of a unitary world outlook, whether religious or secular, or a common language—different histories make a common tradition unattainable—prospects of attaining it would be dim indeed. The existence of diversity and plurality of world outlooks, traditions, languages is for many reasons highly desirable, aside from the intrinsic value of the variety of delightful experiences it makes possible. Fortunately it is not required to sacrifice them in order to reduce the likelihood of war between nations and within nations.

GRANTED, THEN, that the hope of peace and peaceful social change depends more upon the institutional ways of resolving differences of interest than upon common beliefs or rationalisations—in both senses of the word. Still, there are some views about the nature of man and society, some more or less systematically articulated doctrines and attitudes which make more difficult the achievement of the institutional changes required for peace and peaceful change. The mind of man, culturally determined though it be, is not merely a passive resultant of social forces. It cannot be reduced without remainder either to the Objective Mind of Hegel or to the neural impulses of physiological psychology. It reacts selectively upon its conditions and often re-determines, by virtue of its beliefs, the direction of its own development. Thinking makes a difference, and sometimes a crucial difference, when genuine alternatives of action open up before us. To recognise the conditions out of which ideas arise is not incompatible with recognising the great

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impact they may have on events. It is because of their impact that we sometimes seek to understand their origin and validity. Knowledge could never be power unless ideas made a difference. Any intelligent form of Marxism that acknowledges that "men make their own history" acknowledges therewith that ideas count. Otherwise what would be the point of trying to convert people to Marxism? To deny this would be to deny the importance of consciousness.

It is not only true beliefs but false beliefs, not only valid attitudes but invalid attitudes, however they be defined, that affect behaviour. With respect to the prospects of peace among nations and peaceful social change within nations, I believe it is indisputable that Nationalism and Racism are prejudicial to their furtherance. By Nationalism I mean not patriotism, understood in Santayana's phrase as "natural piety for the source of our being" but the glorification of the Nation-state as privileged above others or exempt from principles of political morality in its relation to other states. By "Racism" I mean not the belief that there are inherent genetic differences in capacities between ethnic groups but the belief that to the extent that there are, this justifies invidious distinctions in their social treatment, and an abandonment of the postulate of the moral equality of all persons in the democratic community. There are entire libraries devoted to the evil effects of the ideologies of Nationalism and Racism. It is significant that except for a handful of fanatics all representatives of these ideologies today seek to justify them defensively as nothing more than claims for compensatory inequalities to redress historic grievances.

MORE THREATENING TODAY to world and especially domestic peace is the growth of a family of doctrines that I call the Ideologies of Violence. These ideologies have developed on the peripheries of movements of social protest originally fired by an idealism opposed to war and oppression. Gradually, however, they have acquired a programmatic character of their own. They assert that, to quote one writer,

> The threat of violence, and the occasional outbreak of real violence (which gives the threat credibility) are essential elements in conflict resolution not only in international but also national communities.[1]

Some go further and assert that violence and the threat of violence are necessary and useful in achieving social reforms. The criticism of the use of violence is denounced as hypocritical, as a way of playing the game of the Establishment, as a reaching for a cowardly peace with it. I cannot recall any period in American history in which there has been so much extenuation and glorification of the use of violence not as episodic forays of symbolic character to call attention to shocking evils but as a legitimate strategy in social, political—and even educational reform. (It will be recalled that even John Brown and most of those who rallied to his defence after the raid at Harper's Ferry denied that his original intention was violence against persons or destruction of property, insurrection or murder but only a design to free the slaves and lead them to Canada. Up to the Civil War, the leading abolitionists were pacifists.)

Until recently those who defended the role of violence in social change did so in the main from a revolutionary perspective that forthrightly repudiated democracy as a political system either as a sham, covering up class rule, or as an inadequate institutional expression of self-government. The only question that faced the revolutionist when the question of violence was posed was an instrumental one—the relative cost, effectiveness and consequences of extra-parliamentary means of opposition compared with the legal means when they were available. Marxists, as a rule, have been opposed to *individual* acts of terror, to the "propaganda of the deed" as a senseless policy that plays into the hands of reaction. They recognise and condone *class* violence. The violence of class against class is to them only an acute form of the inescapable class struggle. Daniel De Leon is the only orthodox Marxist I know who expressly declared that a constitutional victory for socialism without any violence was *preferable* because its legality represented a triumph for the principle of civilisation. Marx himself declared that in the case of England, United States, and Holland peaceful transition to socialism was "possible." They were exceptions to the perspective of forcible overthrow. Lenin cancelled the exceptions and proclaimed the inevitability

[1] H. L. Nieberg, "The Uses of Violence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (1963), vol. 7, no. 1, p. 43.

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of war between the communist and non-communist world in the inevitable triumph of the communist system. Lenin's disciples, especially Stalin, echoed him on this matter to the last syllable. It was Khrushchev, reluctantly convinced of the lethal possibilities of nuclear weapons, who had the courage to modify Leninist doctrine. He asserted that the victory of world Communism was still inevitable but not inevitably through war. War was still possible, wars of national liberation very probable, but Armageddon was not necessary. For tactical purposes some national Communist parties have cautiously put forward the non-Leninist idea that they may conquer political power without violence—especially if their opponents are accommodating enough to surrender.

I shall not pursue the analysis of the Communist theory and practice of violence and its divagations from Lenin to the present because it is so frankly opportunist in character that the real intent of Communists can only be construed, not from their words, but from the constellation of forces in which they find themselves at the moment. Simple justice, however, requires the recognition that they too find the ideologists of violence in some countries somewhat of an embarrassment.

WHAT IS COMPARATIVELY NOVEL in our time is the defence of violence by those who are not prepared openly to abandon the standpoint of democracy but who, out of design or confusion, contend that a "healthy" or "just" or "progressive" democratic society will tolerate violence, recognise its productive, even creative role, and eschew any strategy for the control of violence by resort to the force of the civil authorities or to police power.

A Report of one of the Task Forces of the "National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence" (*The Politics of Protest*) concludes by repudiating the conventional wisdom of the so-called "two-pronged approach" to violence. The first prong of this approach seeks to control or restrain the violence. The second prong attempts to meet genuine grievances by appropriate reform and remedies. Apparently the use of "controlled force to protect civil order," while efforts are organised to cope adequately with the underlying grievances, is unacceptable to Prof. Skolnick's Task Force. On this view once the demands made by those who are violent are distinguished from the causes of the violence, the major effort must go into meeting the demands, into reforming society, not into curbing violence. Society itself must accept the burden of guilt for the violence. Those who initiate the violence must be considered victims not malefactors.

It goes almost without saying that this sympathetic approach to manifestations of violence is limited only to particular groups and to special causes. It is not generalised to hold for all public violence, especially violence *against* good causes. It is not brought to bear on the public violence of groups enraged by the violence of the partisans of "good" causes. We are therefore not dealing with general principles of social action whose validity can be tested by universalising them to assess their consistency and social consequences. We are dealing with a proposed strategy in a struggle for power—a strategy that appears to me both arbitrary and short-sighted.

There are certain common sense objections that are flagrantly overlooked in this rejection of the "two-pronged approach." First of all, to urge that we treat only the *causes* of violence, and not divide our energies by efforts to curb violence overlooks the obvious fact that we do not always know what the causes of violence are when the facts of violence are quite manifest. Second, even if we believe we *know* what the causes are—treating them properly, remedying the evils, changing the behaviour patterns necessary to change the situation, may require time. For example, if the existence of slums is regarded as the chief cause of urban violence (something not really established), rebuilding the city ghetto or dispersing it cannot take place overnight. If violence meanwhile is not curbed more buildings may be burned than can be constructed in the same time period. To be sure *promises* to reform the city can be easily made. And it is true that it is not certain that these promises will be kept once the danger of arson and violence is contained. But neither is it certain that violence, arson, and looting will expedite the redemption of promises of reform. To this very day the scarred, desolate streets of our riot-torn cities are a gaunt and painful reminder of the ineffectuality of violence. Is it not possible that the fear inspired by the violence and confrontation instead of spurring on reforms or strengthening the desire for reform may set off a counter-violence? Why is it assumed that violence will result in the mutual accommoda-

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tion of interests rather than in further provocation and escalation of violence?

Thirdly, let us suppose we escape this danger and violence does not call into existence its own Nemesis. Is there nothing illegitimate and blameworthy about the action even if it turns out successfully? Is there no socially deleterious effect of violence upon the delicate fabric of confidence and trust, so essential to a civilised society, if it can be rudely torn whenever violence pays?

I shall return to these questions. I raise them here only to indicate the degree to which violation and incitement to violence are acquiring today a respectable status. They have become *salonfähig*. They are assumed to have a legitimate, in some quarters, an essential role in the process by which consensus, even democratic consensus, is established.

One of the most frequent confusions in the apologetic literature of violence is the identification of force and violence. Since all government and law rest ultimately—although not exclusively—upon force, the universality of the actual or potential exercise of force prepares the ground for a slide to the view that violence, too, is universal and therefore an inescapable facet of all social life. Those who condemn resort to violence in a democracy are then denounced as themselves confused or hypocritical.

The differing connotations of the words "force" and "violence," the fact that in actual usage there is something strained in substituting one expression for another in all contexts, suggests that they refer to different situations or types of experience. Violence is not physical force *simpliciter* but the "illegal" or "immoral" use of physical force. That is why the term "violence" has a negative and disparaging association except when it anticipates a more acceptable state of affairs, political or moral, in behalf of which physical force is used, *i.e.*, when "revolutionary violence" is approved.

"Force" is normatively neutral in meaning. It cannot be renounced without making ideals that encounter resistance ineffectual. Only absolute pacifists can consistently condemn the use of physical force under all circumstances. And their argument can be shown to be self-defeating or irrational, for it is apparent that the very values on behalf of which the use of force is foresworn—the preservation of life, the absence of cruelty, the avoidance of indignity—under some circumstances can be furthered only by the use of force. Force is necessary to sustain or enforce legal rights wherever they are threatened—and human rights, too, which have a moral authority of their own to justify them. Otherwise they are no more than aspirations or pious hopes. When James Meredith was denied the right to study at the University of Mississippi, when Negro women and children were prevented from attending school at Little Rock, after the U.S. Supreme's Court's first school desegregation decision, it was force that protected and redeemed their right against the violence and the threat of violence of the Southern mob.

Whatever rules of the political game are established in order to resolve human conflicts, personal or group, force must ultimately defend or enforce the rules if they are attacked. Where a party resorts to violence in order to breach those rules, to disrupt or destroy the game, it cannot justifiably *equate* its violence with the force used to sustain the rules so long as it professes allegiance to the political system defined by those rules. That is why it makes little sense to discuss the questions of force and violence in the abstract independently of the political context. What holds true for the use and limits of violence in a despotism is not true for the use and limits of violence in a democracy.

One of the most powerful justifications of democracy is that it more readily permits the resolution of human conflicts by argument, persuasion, and debate than is the case under anarchy or despotism. Under anarchy the chaos of recurrent violence defeats the possibility of consensus. Under despotism the appearance of consensus is achieved by terror—the unrestrained and unrestricted use of force. When violence breaks out in a democracy, to that extent it marks the failure or the weakness of the system. Some have therefore concluded that democracy is too noble and rational an ideal to be serviceable to man. Others resign themselves to the suicide of democracy by inactivity in the face of violence. But these do not exhaust the alternatives. A democracy has the moral right to protect itself. Its legitimate use of force to preserve the rules of a democratic society, to enforce the rights without which democracy cannot function, may be wise or unwise, judicious or injudicious. But such use cannot sensibly be classified as violence. The demo-

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"In Defence of Terrorism"

Cambridge, Mass

THE ONLY REASON I wouldn't blow up the *Center for International Affairs is that I might get caught. But the desire is there. As it is for the 7094 Computer, the Instrumentation Labs, and the Center for International Studies at M.I.T., draft boards, army bases, the Pentagon, the White House, the Capitol, New York City, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Harvard University. I would probably remove the authentic examples of Egyptian and Sumerian art from the Semitic Museum at the Center first. The copies, though, should probably go....*

What has happened to our generation is that we never got what we wanted. We've only been led to believe that we have. Many of us know now what we want. Or at least we know what we don't want. We don't want the war or any part of the whole civilisation. It might be necessary to go back two hundred years and start again.

We have an irreconcilable tension in our existence, all the way from breakfast to bedtime. Blowing up a bad thing will relieve much of that tension. So that the preceding sentence doesn't become evidence for any of the rampant psychological reductionist theories about radicals, it should be pointed out that the psychological problems most of us have are very directly capitalism's fault.

I MAY HAVE LEARNED *only two things in my four years at Harvard. The first is that an equally intelligent, rational, and valid argument can be made on all sides of any question from any and all premises. The second is that those arguments have no relationship to anything but themselves. To make this more clear, I will affirm that I do not think there exists any argument that can justify American foreign policy. The point is that arguments are based on reason and the valid laws of discourse can prove anything within their system. It is the feeling I have in my stomach against the war that matters. Any argument in favour of it does not.*

I will admit that I have never understood tactics. They have always seemed to me a way to forget about getting from one place to another. The argument says that blowing up buildings does not organise anyone. I will respond that blowing up buildings is not intended to organise anyone. It is intended to blow up buildings. Those people who want to organise should denounce those who blow up buildings.

Blowing up buildings can show that you're serious.

THERE IS ONE ADDITIONAL *rationalisation for terrorism. It is probably the most obvious. Jean-Paul Sartre says that what the U.S. is doing in Viet Nam is genocide. What the U.S. is doing is like what Hitler did to the Jews. It is not any less genocide because we promise to stop if the other side capitulates. It may in fact be worse because everyone has seen the pictures in his own living room. If someone had blown up the ovens at Auschwitz or Buchenwald, they would have been rebuilt or the prisoners would have been shipped elsewhere. That is my reason for not blowing them up. The Jews in Germany were caught in their own pragmatism. They did not fight back because it would have made no difference. That could be, though, the very reason to fight.*

TERRORISM *could help restore the understanding of transcendence. Blowing up buildings destroys the product. It destroys what was once thought to be permanent. If buildings begin to blow up all around, people may well ask for a new inquest into the permanent. People might abandon the idea of suffering through life to build a permanent monument. They might adopt the idea of enjoying and participating in the humility towards something else but oneself. This might be possible only after a socialist revolution where self could be rejected for community. Exploding buildings may help the transition.*

WE ARE TOLD CONTINUALLY *that knowledge will make us free. We are taught to ignore irrational consequences and to put our faith in reason. Anyone who has tried to organise against the war knows that it is not the mind alone that defends the war, but the whole personality. We are fed reason in order to give an inferiority complex to the rest of our emotions and senses. What capitalism requires is a decision-maker who thinks his choices are rational.*

We are trapped in a philosophical system of cause and effect. Rationality binds the mind and restricts the soul. It might even destroy the brain cells. We need to be liberated. We should be constrained no longer by possible rational consequences. We should begin to allow other emotions to dictate our actions.

IT IS DIFFICULT *to decide exactly how to fight capitalism. People on the Left have been quick to turn their repressed violence toward themselves rather than bourgeois society. One's allies are often far weaker than one's enemies. The very virtue of terrorism, in fact, is that it allows a spontaneous release of the frustrations caused by capitalism. Capitalism should receive the blows from the pent up hostility that it causes.*

WITH ALL OF THE WORDS *and images we have around us, it may be that action is the only way to open fresh areas of consciousness. In any case, it will take a very concrete destruction of the material foundations of the wrongs we are fighting before we are rid of them. Only then will we be able to plant trees and flowers all over our woes, and begin again.*

***Richard E. Hyland**, in a special supplement to the student undergraduate newspaper, **The Harvard Crimson** (22 October 1969)*

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cratic system ideally seeks to make the use of force in human affairs responsible to those who are governed, and to reduce the occasions, frequency and intensity with which physical force is actually employed. In so far as it expresses a moral ideal, independently of the political systems instrumental to its realisation, it is that the reduction of human suffering, the elimination of pain, the avoidance of bloodshed, and the right to collective self-government are desirable. There is much wider agreement among men on the validity of these ideals than on the best way to achieve them. And despite all the theoretical disagreements and uncertainties about the proper analysis of the meanings of "good" and "better" it does not affect their substantial agreement in many situations on what is specifically good or better. Few reflective persons will deny the proposition that "a divorce is better than a murder"—or when conflict arises in social life, whether in trade unions, political organisations or the life of nations—the proposition that "separation is better than extermination," if these are the only alternatives.

THE IMPORTANCE of considering the question of violence in a *political* context is apparent when we examine some typical syndromes of apologetic justification for violence.

1. The first was exhibited by Mr Rap Brown, the Black Power militant, in his now classic observation in defending urban riots that "Violence is as American as cherry-pie." This piece of wisdom actually is the gist of the findings of several task forces of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (the most notable of which has been Skolnick's *Politics of Protest* to which I have already referred). They gravely inform us that violence is customary in American life—as if that were news, as if that made violence more acceptable, as if the prevalence of violence proved anything more than that the democratic process in America had often broken down in the past, as if the relevant question concerned the past rather than the present and future of the democratic political process, as if the fact that something is authentically American necessarily made it as praiseworthy as cherry pie. Certainly, lynching is as American as cherry pie but hardly a cause for boasting!

2. A second popular syndrome of apologetic justification for violence may be called the Boston Tea Party syndrome. Since our patriotic American forbears dumped valuable property into the harbour and engaged in other acts of violence, why is it wrong, we are asked, for present-day rebels to follow suit? Here, too, it is shocking to observe both the source and the frequency of this response to criticism of violence. The *SDS* invoked the Boston Tea Party in their legal defence of their violence at Columbia University and elsewhere. In their case the exuberance and ignorance of youth may perhaps be pleaded in extenuation. But what shall we say of the adults who in a special foreword to *The Politics of Protest* wrote:

> We take the position that the growth of this country has occurred around a series of violent upheavals and that each one has thrust the nation forward. The Boston Tea Party was an attempt by a few to alter an oppressive system of taxation without representation. The validation of these men rested on their attempts to effect needed social change. If the Boston Tea Party is viewed historically as a legitimate method of producing such change, then present day militancy [*i.e.*, violence] whether by blacks or students, can claim a similar legitimacy. (Greer and Cobb, *The Politics of Protest*, p. xi.)

This total disregard of the fact that the American colonists had no means of remedying their grievances by peaceful constitutional change is symptomatic of the grossly unhistorical approach to problems of social change. It is reinforced by the cool disregard of peaceful changes under our constitutional system of extending representation. Further, what is morally and politically permissible to a democrat struggling for freedom under despotic political conditions is not permissible to him once the mechanisms of democratic consent have been established. Democracy cannot function if political decisions are to be made not through political process but by actions of street mobs, no matter how originally well-intentioned. To be sure, democratic institutions work slowly and, like all institutions, imperfectly. That is the price of democracy which the democrat cheerfully pays because he knows on the basis of history and psychology that the price of any other political alternative is much higher. The democrat who pins his faith on democracy knows that the majority can be wrong but he will not therefore accept the rule of a minority because it occasionally may be right. The integrity of the process by which a minority may peacefully become or win a majority is all-important to him. If the democratic process

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functions in such a way as to violate the basic moral values of any group of citizens, they have a right to attempt to overthrow it by revolution but they cannot justifiably do so in the name of democracy. And it is open to others to counter these efforts on the basis of their own revolutionary or counter-revolutionary mandate from heaven.[2]

3. The third syndrome challenges the contention that a principled democrat cannot reform an existing democracy by violence without abandoning democratic first principles. This position asserts that existing means of dissent are inadequate, that the wells of public knowledge are poisoned, that the majority has been misled by its education, corrupted by affluence or enslaved by its passions. Allowing for certain changes in time and idiom this indictment against democracy is as old as the Platonic critique. (But Plato did not pretend to be a democrat.) That the institutional life and mechanisms of American democracy are inadequate is undeniable. But just as undeniable is the fact that in many respects they are more adequate today than they have ever been in the past, that dissent has a voice, a platform, a resonance greater than ever before. The issue is, however, this: Does a democrat, dissatisfied with the workings of a democracy, strive to make them more adequate by resorting to violence or by appealing with all the arts of persuasion at his command, from an unenlightened majority to an enlightened one? And what is the test of the inadequacy of existing democratic mechanisms to remedy grievances? That the minority has failed to persuade the majority? This is like saying that a democrat will be convinced that elections are truly democratic only when *he* wins them. Having failed to persuade the majority by democratic and constitutional means, the minority claims the right in the name of a hypothetical, future majority to impose its opinions and rule by violence on the present majority. And by a series of semantic outrages it calls this a democratic method of reforming democracy!

It is easy enough to expose this when it is—as it has often been in the past—a stratagem in the propaganda offensive of totalitarian groups. But the difficulty is greater when these contentions are put forward by individuals who sincerely believe themselves committed to democracy. What they are really saying in their sincere confusion is that in any democratic society that falls short of perfection—that is, in any democratic society in which they fall short of winning a majority—they have a democratic right to resort to violence—which is absurd. Unfortunately, as Cicero once observed, there is no absurdity to which some human beings will not resort to defend another absurdity.

4. The fourth syndrome in the contemporary apologetic literature of violence is the justification of the tactics of violent disruption and confrontation on the ground that the state itself employs force, and sometimes makes an unwise use of it either in war or in preserving domestic peace. Who has not heard militants of the New Left, not only students but their professorial allies, countering rebukes of their irresponsible resort to violence with the cry: "But the Government uses force! Therefore it cannot be wrong for us to use it...." Only an anarchist who does not recognise any state authority can consistently make this kind of retort—and even anarchists are not likely to be much impressed by it if it were to be mouthed by raiding parties of the Ku Klux Klan and similar groups. In any society, democratic or not, where the state does not have a monopoly of physical force to which all other sanctions are ultimately subordinate, we face incipient civil war.

Nor is the situation any different when the state embarks upon actions that offend the moral sensibilities of some of its citizens. In a debate with Noam Chomsky at Oberlin College last year, I was asked by Professor Chomsky: "How can you reasonably protest against the comparatively limited use of violence by the *SDS* at Columbia University and elsewhere [of which incidentally he did *not* approve] in view of the massive use of violence by the United States in Viet Nam?" It is a retort frequently heard when student and Black militant violence

[2] Disregard of these considerations is only one of the failings in the scandalous piece of propaganda for violence which appears under the auspices of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence. Of Skolnick's *Politics of Protest*, Professor Milton R. Konvitz of Cornell University, a genuine civil libertarian, outstanding for his compassion and scrupulous sense of fairness, writes: "The main thrust of the book is to validate political violence in America. There is very little in the body of the work that would tend to dispel the myth of violent progress and that would make the value of a constitutional democracy' credible —not in some utopian society but in the United States" *Saturday Review*, 15 November 1969.

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is condemned. Professor Chomsky is a great admirer of A. J. Muste, the late revolutionary pacifist leader. I find it ironical that the question he asked me is the same kind of question hurled at Muste by members of the Communist Party in the 1930s in rejoinder to Muste's protests against the violent disruption of the meetings of the American Workers Party of which, together with others, we were the founders. They said to Muste: "How can you bring yourself to protest against the inconsequential and largely symbolic violence of Young Communists in breaking up your meetings while Hitler is mobilising all the violence of Fascist reaction against the European working class?" One would never have guessed from Muste's language at these junctures that he was a clergyman!

For one thing these rhetorical questions overlook the obvious fact that one can be opposed *both* to student violence on campus and to the American involvement in Viet Nam just as one could bitterly resist *both* the Stalinist goon squads and Hitler's terrorists who were to clasp arms in fraternal consent a few years later. And even if this were not the case, as we easily can conceive it by changing the illustrations, the comparison is specious and question-begging to boot. Because we disapprove of violence in one context (say, when extremists organise a riot to prevent a dialogue from taking place), we do not have to disapprove of it in another (say, when those who believe in freedom fight to overthrow their oppressors). The assumption that all of these contexts are necessarily involved with each other will not stand examination for a minute.

THE OBJECTION TO VIOLENCE in a democratic polity stems from various sources—not all of them narrowly political.

The first reflects the civilised and humane belief that the amount of physical coercion of men over other men can be reduced although it cannot ever be eliminated. Even those who are wedded to violence as a strategy of social change profess to believe that their actions will produce a world that ultimately will be less violent. This is extremely unlikely although not inconceivable either theoretically or practically. Tolstoy to the contrary notwithstanding, we *can* sometimes fight fire with fire and touch pitch without being defiled. But because of the interrelationship of means and ends, because the ends achieved depend not on the ends proclaimed but on the consequences of the means used, a very careful assessment of the probabilities is required before embarking on a course that entails much physical coercion. Those who choose the democratic option, whose institutions permit the minority peacefully to become the majority, have presumably calculated the probabilities. Without accepting the argument of absolute pacifism, they recognise the pacifist insight that in using coercive force against the violent domestic and even foreign enemies of a democracy, there is always a danger that we may become like them. But there is no world without its dangers, and the dangers of the triumph of evil through non-resistance or even passive resistance to evil are much greater than that physical resistance to evil will necessarily reinstate the evil.

Another source of opposition to violence is the desire of men for continuity and predictability in their social life within the limits of what is humanly sufferable. It is the *certainty* of the law, the knowledge of what can be relied on as we go about arranging our affairs and tying them into the future, rather than our expectation that the delicate balance of justice will be precisely achieved in human relations, that is its chief desideratum. Violence, especially chronic violence, upsets the normal expectations of orderly procedure. Unless a new pattern of stability is quickly reached, an atmosphere of impending chaos and catastrophe is generated that prepares the ground for the growth and tolerance of despotism. Despotism is not easily or freely chosen. It is accepted more readily when men become fearful of anarchy.

IT IS IN THE LIGHT of these considerations that we must examine what seems to be the most pervasive as well as the most persuasive argument for violence. This maintains that the threat of violence, and its actuality which is necessary to make the threat credible, are the most effective means of achieving reforms, that without the violent extremist the moderate reformer has no chance to implement his programme, that the prospects of reform are always enhanced by the fear generated through the threat of violence and its sporadic outbreaks. *"Kill, burn, ravage!"* exhorts the extremist leader. *"Deal with me, or else face the irresponsibles,"* warns the moderate or reformist leader. His proposed compromises and concessions seem sweetly reasonable against the background mob's shrill

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cries. On this view it is only because of the multitudinous threats of violence emanating from plural pressure groups that keep each other in check that the democratic system works peacefully *on the whole*. But episodically and fitfully there must be outbreaks of violence to reinforce the readiness to be reasonable, to soften if not to dissolve the stubborn recalcitrance dug in to defend the sacred principles of the Establishment.

Without doubt there is some truth to this view. But it is a half-truth and a dangerous half-truth at that. From the abstract proposition that the threat of exercise of violence *may* facilitate enlightened social change or policy, it is the sheerest dogmatism to assume that in any particular situation violence or its threat will in fact serve a beneficial purpose. It may just as likely set up a cycle of escalating violence and counter-violence that will be more costly and undesirable than the reforms subsequently instituted. It all depends upon the case.

The theoretical basis of this position is purely Hobbesian with all its limitations. As one defender of this view puts it:

> In an important sense, all individuals, groups or nations desire "to rule the world" but are constrained to collaborate with others on less desirable terms because of the objective limits of their own power. (H. L. Nieberg, "Uses of Violence.")

In other words the chief, if not only, reason we bargain, tolerate, cooperate, "live-and-let-live" with others is that we are not powerful enough to kill or enslave them. This is false not only for individuals but even for some states in some areas and in some periods of the world. Otherwise we could hardly explain the existence of small, relatively defenceless powers. And even Hobbes recognises (as some of his modern descendants do not) that, despite the hypothetical and largely mythical "natural state of anarchy," once a community is established a binding commitment to resolve differences by due political process arises. For who would enter into a compact to surrender his powers and abide by certain rules if every party to the compact added to it a rider that whenever it was strong enough to violate the rules with impunity, it would do so? If violence always (or even in most cases) "paid," no social life could continue. It was realisation of this that accounts for Hobbes' third law of nature—"that men perform their covenants made."

TURN FROM the dialectic of theory to the record of history.

Is it true that the historical record proves that the fear or the actual outbreak of violence has been the sole or even the most important cause of reform? It would be a fantastic misreading of European and American history to assert this. Vast amounts of social welfare legislation for women, children, the aged, the sick and handicapped, the unemployed, cannot be explained in terms of fear of violence. The motives and causes for their adoption are mixed but among them an expanded social consciousness and sense of responsibility rank high. No one, in our own times, rioted for social security or the National Health Service or *Medicare* or for the acceptance by the Federal government of the revolutionary principle of a *national* minimum of welfare payments. Tremendous advances have been made on both sides of the Atlantic in the defence and extension of civil rights and liberties, in judicial and penal practice, in the liberalisation of laws relating to marriage, divorce, birth control, and abortion. All of these measures—and many more—have been adopted in the absence of any credible threats of violence. Not a single one of the great landmark decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court (including its outlawing of school segregation in 1954 and mandatory state political reapportionment a decade later) was made under the threat of the gun, the mob, or the torch. It was not to violence or the threat of violence that we owe their enactment but to the growth of enlightenment, the enlargement of imagination, and the development of the democratic idea.

The view that violence and the threat of violence are always effective in preparing the minds of men for change is in a sense worse than false. It is thoroughly confused. It does not distinguish between the effect of the fear that violence *may* break out, and the effect of the actual violence *after* it has broken out, between the anticipatory fear and the consequential fear. There is no need to deny that fear of violence, but certainly not fear alone, does often have an influence upon the willingness to reform conditions. And up to a point it is altogether reasonable that it should have an influence. Every society rests upon some shared values that determine acceptable and unacceptable, approved and disapproved norms of conduct. Basic in the hierarchy of such values is a shared interest in survival. Where conditions are so oppressive that those who live under them are

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tempted to a revolt that may encompass our common doom, self-interest legitimately reinforces the weight of ideals and human sympathy in motivating necessary reforms. R. L. Stevenson once observed that "If we were all seated at the same table, no one would go hungry"—and, I add, not because of *fear* but in virtue of the compassion that quickens the perception of need in others. We are indeed seated at the same table but there are so many and they are so far away from us that those out of sight are out of mind. Our imaginations are often too weak and uncultivated to close the gap. Where vision falters, common sense or intelligent fear may suggest a sensible course of conduct. If consideration for others does not lead to our extending to them the courtesy of the road, prudent fear for our own safety should. If the deficiencies of our imagination and moral feeling make us insensitive or indifferent to the plague, the poverty, the crime and degradation that flourish beyond our narrow horizons, then chill fear—born of the realisation that these contagious evils, these diseases of body and spirit could strike down our own children—may shake us out of our torpor into taking remedial action. Under such circumstances intelligent fear, including fear that basic human needs long frustrated may erupt in violence, furthers cooperative effort.

Although *fear* of violence is often a persuasive reason among others for initiating reforms, this is not true to the same extent of overt, repeated *threats* of violence. And least persuasive of all is the brute outbreak of violence that imperils security of life, of one's home and property. For the consequence of such violence is the generation of hysteria and panic among its victims and all elements of the population who identify empathetically with them. This is particularly true when women and children are in the path of the violence.

Mass hysteria and panic are blind. They mistake fantasy for reality and breed unreasoning, not intelligent, fear and hate. If enough people among the majority are swept up in these emotions a reaction sets in, all the more intense for being delayed, that makes reforms more difficult to achieve, not less. It not only can stop the movement toward reform—it sometimes reverses it.

WHOEVER, THEN, CALCULATES on the educational value of violence for the community, who anticipates that violence will strengthen the influence of moderates and expedite reform is taking a considerable risk—a foolish risk, and in the absence of compelling evidence that no other way is possible, a criminally irresponsible risk. He risks provoking a back-lash, risks the hardening of opposition to further reforms, risks a counter-violence that as it escalates moves the conflict towards civil war, the cruellest form of all wars. In short, violence more often drowns out the voice of moderation than it succeeds in getting a hearing for it otherwise denied. It narrows options, destroys the centre, and polarises the community into extremes.

The American Civil War is a case in point. It did not solve the Negro question. We are still suffering from its legacy of hate and fear which left the Negro politically disfranchised (despite his legal emancipation as a war measure in 1863), economically in peonage, and socially and educationally victimised by a Jim Crow system. It is still a moot question among historians whether at one time Lincoln's original plan of liberation of the slaves by purchase at a far lesser cost in life, money, suffering and paranoic hatred, would not have integrated the Negroes into American life more quickly and more effectively than did the Civil War. The prospects for the adoption of Lincoln's plan diminished to the vanishing point as the fanatics of violence on both sides heated regional consciousness with its passionate loyalties to the boiling point.

What is not moot at all is the fact that since the Civil War the greatest gains in the condition of the Negroes in the United States were won not in consequence of violence or the threat of violence but by the use of democratic administrative and legal processes fortified in recent times by the non-violent civil rights movement headed by Dr. Martin Luther King. Civil (*i.e.*, non-violent) disturbance has a place in a democratic community as a means of bearing testimony and re-educating the majority. Uncivil (*i.e.*, violent) disturbance has no place whatsoever. The ghetto riots that periodically swept cities during the first three decades of this century brought no substantial reforms despite great loss of life. Anyone who recalls the state of the U.S.A. before World War I and today will testify to the remarkable progress made—granted, of course, that this progress has still far to go to achieve the substantial equality to which all groups are entitled in a democratic community.

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Mr. Roy Wilkins in defending the impressive record of the NAACP in its unremitting militant but non-violent struggle for Negro rights recently reminded a group of black extremists, impatient with its methods, that the victories won by the NAACP and other organisations of the Negro people had changed the political picture of the country, provided the opportunities for the extremists to be heard and to survive, and had laid the basis for still greater victories. He charged that white racism was responsible for the emergence of black racism; but he warned that black racism would result only in a stronger and subtler form of white racism. And he pleaded for the abolition of every form of racism in human relations.

WHAT HOLDS FOR the relationship between violence and reform with respect to the Negro citizens of the United States holds true even more obviously for the relationship between student violence and university reform. Some apologists for student violence maintain that it led to necessary and healthy curricular and administrative reforms in the university. The wisdom of such reforms remains problematic where they were adopted not on the basis of sound educational inquiry but (as was frankly proclaimed in many institutions) as a means of keeping the campus quiet, of bringing peace to embroiled institutions. This is an extraordinary criterion by which to determine the validity of an educational curriculum.

Where the educational reforms mark essential improvements in instruction and administration, the crucial question to be decided is whether they would have been adopted if students had persistently agitated for them through the customary forms of dissent without threatening to tear the university apart or burn-

Fascism . . .

Flint, Michigan

THE WEATHERMAN *controlling faction of SDS held a national "war council" here December 27–30. About 400 young people showed up at the gathering—nominally SDS's quarterly national council meeting—to practise karate, rap in regional and collective meetings, dig a little music and hear the "Weather Bureau" lay down its political line for revolution in America.*

The Weatherman group, which came to power at the SDS convention in June, called the meeting to try to bring together various parts of the radical movement and other young people, including those turned on and off by Weatherman politics.

"We've made a lot of mistakes," said Bernardine Dohrn, a Weatherman leader. The meeting was planned to make amends for some of these mistakes—such as the hostility shown by Weatherman for the rest of the movement—and to broaden support for Weatherman politics and actions.

THE MEETING HALL *was decked with large banners of revolutionary leaders—Che, Ho, Fidel, Malcolm X, Eldridge Cleaver—hanging from the ceiling. One entire wall of the ballroom was covered with alternating black and red posters of murdered Illinois Panther leader Fred Hampton. An enormous cardboard machine gun hung from the ceiling.*

Violence was the keynote of the long hours of talk that began December 27. The distinction between revolutionary armed struggle and violence for its own sake is a major point of contention between Weatherman and its numerous critics.

Weatherman sees revolutionary change in America as happening almost solely, if at all, as a belated reaction to a successful world revolution including a successful revolt by the black colony inside the U.S.

The logic of that view was expressed in a statement by Ted Gold, a top Weatherman, who said that "an agency of the people of the world" would be set up to run the U.S. economy and society after the defeat of the U.S. imperialism abroad.

A critic spoke up: "In short, if the people of the world succeed in liberating themselves before American radicals have made the American revolution, then the Vietnamese and Africans and the Chinese are gonna move in and run things for white America. It sounds like a John Bircher's worst dream. There will have to be more repression than ever against white people, but by refusing to organise people, Weatherman isn't even giving them half a chance."

"Well," replied Gold, "if it will take fascism, we'll have to have fascism."

WEATHERMAN—*virtually all white—continues to promote the notion that white working people in America are inherently counter-revolutionary, impossible to organise, or just plain evil—"honky bastards," as many Weathermen put it.*

Weatherman leader Howie Machtinger derided white workers for desiring better homes, better food and essentially better lives.

A new Weatherman catchword was "barbarism." The Weathermen see themselves as playing a role similar to that of the barbarian tribes, such as the Vandals and the Visigoths, who invaded and destroyed the decadent, corrupt Rome.

Bernardine Dohrn, former inter-organisational secretary of SDS for 1968–69, gave the opening

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ing it down. The most significant feature of the student rebellion at Berkeley, at Columbia, at Harvard and elsewhere is that the grievances were not in the first instance connected with the students' own educational experience but with issues unrelated to curricular matters. Subsequently educational issues were moved to the forefront from the far periphery of student interest to outflank the devastating criticism of student irrationality in holding the university responsible for social and political involvements altogether beyond its sphere of competence and authority.

That *some* good results from violence does not justify the violence unless it can be proved that the good so achieved was necessary, could not have been achieved more effectively and at a lesser cost in other ways, and did not result in evil that outweighed the good. It is notorious that wars accomplish (or, rather, result in) some good—*e.g.*, a great many advances in science, technology, and medicine have resulted from war. But only someone seriously deficient in compassion and imagination would therefore justify war. The truth of the matter is that most educational reforms in most institutions have come about *without* a show of force, where arguments have been the only weapons, where dissenters and protesters have evinced not only zeal but persistence in a good cause. Where violence has ben used, a grievous wound has been inflicted on the fabric of university community life. It may take a generation to heal it. For the commitment of the university, even more so than of the democratic community, has been to the processes of deliberation and to the authority of reason.

Some faculty apologists for the student rebels have sought to play down the enormity of the offences against intellectual and academic free-

. . . *and the Left*

speech. She began by admitting that a lot of Weatherman's actions have been motivated by "a white guilt trip."

"But we fucked up a lot anyway. We didn't fight around Bobby Seale when he was shackled at the Conspiracy Trial. We should have torn the courtroom apart. We didn't smash them when Mobe peace creeps hissed David Hilliard on Moratorium Day in San Francisco. We didn't burn Chicago down when Fred was killed."

Part of armed struggle, as Dohrn and others laid it down, is terrorism. Political assassination —openly joked about by some Weathermen— and literally any kind of violence that is considered anti-social were put forward as legitimate forms of armed struggle.

"We were in an airplane," Dohrn related, "and we went up and down the aisle 'borrowing' food from people's plates. They didn't know we were Weathermen; they just knew we were crazy. That's what we're about, being crazy motherfuckers and scaring the shit out of honky America."

A 20-FOOT LONG POSTER *adorned another wall of the ballroom. It was covered with drawings of bullets, each with a name. Along with the understandable targets like Chicago's Mayor Daley, the Weathermen deemed as legitimate enemies to be offed, among others, the* Guardian *(which has criticised Weatherman) and Sharon Tate, one of several victims in the recent mass murder in California. She was eight months pregnant.*

"Honkies are going to be afraid of us," Dohrn insisted. She went on to tell the war council about Charlie Manson, accused leader of the gang which allegedly murdered the movie star and several others on their Beverly Hills estate.

Weatherman, the "Bureau" says, digs Manson, not only for his understanding of white America—the killer purportedly wrote "pig" in blood on the wall after the murder—but also because he's a "bad motherfucker."

"Dig it, first they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them, then they even shoved a fork into a victim's stomach! Wild!" said Bernardine Dohrn.

Women members of Weatherman held a panel discussion on women's liberation. The fighting women, "the women who can carry bombs under their dresses like in 'The Battle of Algiers,'" was put forward as the only valid model for women's liberation.

They sang a medley of Weatherman songs, high camp numbers such as, "I'm Dreaming of a White Riot," "Communism Is What We Do," and "We Need a Red Party." Spirited chants broke out, too: "WOMEN POWER!" "STRUGGLING POWER!" "RED ARMY POWER!" "SIRHAN SIRHAN POWER!" "CHARLIE MANSON POWER!" "POWER TO THE PEOPLE!" "OFF THE PIG!"

Another speaker referred to the white women's role as reproducer and characterised white women who bring up children in white America as "pig mothers."

In a long address by "Weather Bureau" member John Jacobs, the "White Devil" theory of all world history was laid out. "We're against everything that's 'good and decent,'" Jacobs declared. That notion, coupled with the White Devil theory, formed the basis of what they call "Serve the People Shit."

Liberation News Service despatch in the Left-wing U.S. weekly THE GUARDIAN (10 January 1970)

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dom by dismissing them as inconsequential. "Just a few buildings burned," they say—"some machines destroyed, a handful of classes disrupted, a dozen or so administrators and professors manhandled. . . ." This is as if one were to extenuate the corruption of justice by the numbers of magistrates not bribed, the desecration of a temple by the unusual character of the defilement, lynchings by their infrequency. The sober fact is that violence has reached such proportions on the campuses today that the whole atmosphere of American—and not a few European (not to mention Japanese)—universities has been transformed. The appeal to reason is no longer sufficient to resolve problems or even to keep the peace. In order to make itself heard in some of our most prestigious institutions, the appeal to reason must finally appeal to the courts and to the police.

Violence in the academy is an outgrowth of violence in the streets and cities of the country. That is where the gravest current danger lies. Were violence confined to the universities alone its evils could not long continue if only because the state and society on whose support the universities ultimately depend would restrict and perhaps cancel their precarious autonomy. This could easily be done under the currently fashionable slogans of "community control" and "participatory democracy" in educational institutions.

IN THE DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY AT LARGE the resort to violence, instead of reliance upon the due political process of a self-governing republic, attacks that community at its foundations. And this regardless of the merit of the cause or the sincerity and self-righteousness of the *engagés* and the *enragés*. For every such outbreak of violence makes other outbreaks of violence more likely by serving as a model or precedent to some, or as a provocation to others —in either case escalating the violence.

In this connection Alexander Hamilton was truly prophetic. In the *Federalist Papers* he warned us of this:

> . . . every breach of the fundamental law, though dictated by necessity, impairs that sacred reverence which ought to be maintained in the breast of rulers [who in a self-governing republic are all the people] towards the Constitution of the country, and forms a precedent for other breaches, where the same plea of necessity does not exist at all, or is less urgent and palpable.

Hamilton unerringly cited, on the basis of evidence from the past, the great danger of situations of this kind—the likelihood that citizens "to be more safe . . . at length become more willing to run the risk of becoming less free."

In the end, then, the great paradox and the great truth is that in a democratic society freedom, which is often invoked to justify violence, is itself imperilled by the exercise of violence. The ideologists of violence in a democracy are the sappers and miners of the forces of despotism, the gravediggers, willing or unwilling, of the precious heritage of freedom.

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An Apple Tree and a Pig

Oian a parchellan, ni hawdd cysgaf
Rhag gowrdd y galar y sydd arnof,

1.

All men wait for battle and when it comes
Pass along the sword's edge their resilient thumbs.

Men clasp in faithless arms their sobbing wives
Tasting even in the salt kiss the bliss pricking points of knives.

Men clip on armour and see in their children's eyes
Their swollen images, their godlike size.

Men assemble together, create a new sea
That floods into battle. Men become free

Of the dull bonds of life, become locked in a flight
In love in league with Death, lost in icy delight.

2.

In such a frenzy I slaughtered my sister's son.
My sword cut open his face and I screamed as though I had won

Glory to nurse in the night, until I turned and saw
The flesh of Gwenddolau, the young king who loved me, raw

And Rhydderch's sword dull with Gwenddolau's blood
And his great mouth trumpeting joy. Ah then I understood

That rooted and nourished in my own affectionate heart
Was the spitting devil tearing our world apart.

3.

When I fled to the wood, alone I lay under a tree
Still hearing the clash of our swords, still dumb in my agony.

So much despair had crowded into my heart
My tongue was cold, speech a forgotten art.

As I lay in the wood I suffered the germ of peace
To penetrate my veins like a lethal disease.

4.

I have lost all desire to communicate with men.
My sighs do not disturb the building wren.

An apple tree and a pig: these are my friends
With whom I share my wisdom that no longer pretends

To be wise, since nothing my wisdom brings
Can restore the lost kingdom or challenge the armour of kings.

I have eaten the apple of knowledge and all I know
Is that love must fail and lust must overthrow

And in the nights of winter when the ice-winds howl
A pity and a terror fasten themselves on my soul

And I cry upon death to wrap his white redress
Without mercy about the stillness of the merciless
And remedy my madness with long silence.

Emyr Humphreys

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James Wellard

Treasures of Desert Monasteries

ORGANISED scientific exploration of Egypt —its deserts, oases, pharaonic monuments, and Christian monasteries—could only really begin in the 19th century after the Moslem world had been opened by European military, commercial, and diplomatic penetration. Even so, during the first half of that century, it was still not safe to travel in parts of the Middle East or, for that matter, anywhere in Africa; but this was because the Great Powers, notably Britain and France, had not yet had time to consolidate their newly acquired territories or "spheres of influence." Explorers and travellers to these lands which had been for so long cut off from the Christian world underwent immense hardships in their journeyings, and not all returned to their homes to sit down and write an account of what they saw. Those who survived the hazards wrote excellent travel books, the like of which can never, of course, be written again, for the world they described —a world in which even the deserts were teeming with animals—has vanished. All these books are now out of print.

We find that those adventurers who first penetrated into what were still unknown lands were usually young, well born, broadly educated with an emphasis on classical learning, not specialists on any particular subjects, yet searchers animated by a genuine love of knowledge as well as of adventure. At the same time, the majority of them were collectors—usually for some rich patron; and so apparently inexhaustible was the treasure-house of Egypt that every museum in Europe and thousands of private collections were enriched with the loot of palaces, tombs, mummy-holes, and the sites of once-glorious cities. The chief purveyors of these priceless artefacts were the Egyptians themselves who had never ceased their ancient profession of tomb-robbing. In 1881, Emil Brugsch, Assistant Keeper of the Cairo Museum, found a contemporary tomb-robber's cache of artefacts from the tombs of some *forty pharaohs*. These objects were sold in the bazaars to the small collectors. The real hauls, of course, were made by excavators like the Italo-Englishman Belzoni ("the Patagonian Samson") who sent shiploads of treasure to England, including the famous alabaster sarcophagus of Seti; and the German Lepsius who despatched some 15,000 artefacts to Berlin.

During the last decades of the 19th century, the scholars were hot on the track of papyrus manuscripts, the source material of pre-classical history, a field of scholarship which was being scientifically worked for the first time. Thus, in 1888, Wallis Budge bought the Ani Papyrus (known as "The Book of the Dead") for the British Museum, though this kind of transaction was becoming hazardous as the Egyptian authorities sought to put an end to the dispersement of their national treasures. Wallis Budge himself was actually arrested while trying to buy the Amarna tablets from peasants who had dug them up in the fields and were selling them for a few shillings apiece. (It was on the evidence of these clay tablets written in the cuneiform script that the true history of the ancient Near East was eventually written.) The agent of the British Museum writes:

> I asked to see the warrants for the arrests... and he told me that he was acting on instructions from the Chief of Police at Luxor to take possession of all the houses of all the dealers and to arrest us. He then told Muhammed and myself that we were arrested....
>
> I then tried to make arrangements to get the remainder of the tablets from Tell al-'Armanah into my possession, but they told me they belonged to dealers who were in treaty with an agent of the Berlin Museum in Cairo. Among the tablets was a very large one, about 20 inches long and broad in proportion. We now know that it contained a list of the dowry of a Mesopotamian princess who was going to marry a king of Egypt. The man who was taking this to Cairo hid it between his inner garments and covered himself with his great cloak. As he

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stepped up into the railway coach this tablet slipped from his clothes and fell on the bed of the railway and broke into pieces. . . .[1]

In the meantime, while the Egyptologists, both amateurs and professionals, were acquiring whatever they could lay their hands on in the form of mummies, sarcophagi, statues, plaques, papyri, jewellery, and so forth, the smaller and less publicised group of bibliophiles were ransacking the Coptic monasteries in search of ancient manuscripts as priceless for the history of culture as the Amarna tablets and the mortuary papyri of the tombs. Vansleb's boast, made in the 1660s that he had "emptied Egypt of such kind of books" was, of course, ridiculous. A number of travellers since his time had come away with quite a haul of manuscripts, notably the Maronite priest Joseph Assemani who had been sent into Egypt by the Vatican in 1717 to acquire manuscripts. Assemani came back with 150 choice and beautiful volumes in the Coptic, Ethiopian, Persian, Turkish, Syrian, and Arabic languages. Forty of these books came from the Nitrian monasteries and formed part of the library accumulated in the 10th century by Moses of Nitibis. In 1735, Assemani was sent off again to Egypt and returned with still more precious books. Travellers after Assemani continued to visit the Coptic monasteries and to note the libraries and store-rooms still crammed with beautiful manuscripts.

But it was left to the English bibliophiles of the mid-19th century really to ransack the monks' libraries, even though hundreds of manuscripts had already been acquired by the French and Italian libraries, or had been burnt by the monks in the bread ovens of the convents. The first and most successful of these audacious and colourful bibliophiles was Robert Curzon, 14th Baron Zouche, in many respects the typical British explorer of the early Victorian period.

CURZON was born in 1810, educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, which he left without taking his degree in 1831. At the age of 21, in fact, he was actually returned by his borough to the House of Commons. A year later, the borough was disenfranchised and that was the end of Curzon's parliamentary career. At 23, he left for the Levant where he says in the Preface to his book[2] "the difficulties to a traveller were as great as they would be now in China or the most distant lands." His interest was in old manuscripts, some of which he had found in the library of the family home at Parham in Sussex. He was not so much interested in the contents of ancient manuscripts as in the handwriting, upon which subject he intended to write an exhaustive history. So it was in search of manuscripts that he set off for Egypt, for like most amateurs of the time, he believed that many of the lost Greek classics might be found in the monastic libraries of the Near East. Such manuscripts were undoubtedly once on the shelves of either the monastery collections or in the lumber rooms of Turkish soldiers who plundered the convents during the Greek Revolt. It was the dream of European bibliophiles to have the luck of Edward Clarke, traveller and antiquary, who brought back an early manuscript of Plato from Patmos, in addition to other precious books, notably an *Arabian Nights* procured in Cairo.

The first half of the 19th century, then, was the golden age for rich collectors who had the time, means, and fortitude to roam through the Near Eastern countries looking for statues, coins, vases, mummies, manuscripts, and the treasures of the ancient world. Thus, the same Dr. Clarke who carried off the Plato from Patmos also removed from Eleusis in Greece a colossal Greek statue of the 4th century B.C. weighing nearly two tons. Clarke's problems involved not only bribing the Turkish authorities to allow him to carry off this monument, but appeasing the local peasants who had been accustomed for generations to burn a lamp before it on festive days—perhaps from classical times themselves, since the statue was thought to be of Demeter, the Earth Mother. When the peasants objected to losing their divinity, Clarke brought in a priest to exorcise the image by striking the first blow with a pickaxe at the rubbish in which the statue was partially buried. All two tons of it were loaded aboard an Italian merchant ship which proceeded with dozens of cases of classical loot collected by Clarke to England where the freighter was wrecked off Beachy Head. The statue of Demeter, however, was saved.

All of this gives us some idea of the treasures which were available to the more intrepid travellers of the 19th century, explaining, in fact, the fantastically rich and varied collections now owned by the national (and even local)

[1] Sir Ernest A. T. W. Budge, *By Nile and Tigris* (1920), p. 87.

[2] Robert Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant* (1916).

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museums of the Western world. And Robert Curzon, at twenty-three, already a keen antiquary and bibliophile, decided to take part in the hunt. His connections as the grandson of a viscount and son of a baroness were especially good among the contemporary aristocracy who held diplomatic posts in the capitals of the Ottoman empire; and the young Curzon probably heard from these well-informed observers of the treasures in the libraries of the Egyptian monasteries. In fact, Lord Prudhoe, afterwards fourth Duke of Northumberland, may have tipped him off about the Nitrian monasteries where he, Prudhoe, had actually seen an oil cellar littered two feet deep with ancient manuscripts, none of which the monks would part with, despite the presence of Linant de Bellefonds Bey, friend and adviser of the viceroy Mohammed Ali. Lord Prudhoe was too much of the old-fashioned English gentleman either to browbeat the monks or to bribe them, and he came away with nothing except his memories of the treasures in the oil cellar. Curzon was determined to see that particular cellar at all costs, and he made his way to the desert monastery of the Syrians and what befell him there is one of the best stories in the travel literature of the 19th century.

He was certainly an "original" and describes his own appearance himself in his usual drily witty vein.

> My personal appearance must have been remarkable: I had a long beard and so thin a face that my nose was translucent, if not transparent. I had a Persian cap upon my head, and over other garments a toilette of my own invention, which vested me with a dignity peculiar to myself: this was a large eiderdown quilt, of bright green silk, in the middle of which I had caused a hole to be made through which I put my head, the two ends of the quilt hung down before and behind me like a chasuble or a poncho; round it I tied a girdle. My general appearance must have been rather striking to the beholder....[3]

But Curzon was more robust than he gives us to understand here when he first visited Egypt in 1837 at the age of 27. He was that most felicitous type of traveller, a young man with a very keen eye and an even keener sense of humour. Naturally, like all young gentlemen of his generation, he feels obliged to express his indignation at the institution of the harem; at the same time he implies his interest in the occupants of the proscribed quarters in his report of the following letter from a lady of the harem to her Armenian agent. He gives it in the original:

> Constantinople, 1844.
>
> *My Noble Friend,*
>
> Here are the featherses sent. My soul, my noble friend, are there no other featherses leaved in the shop besides these featherses? And these featherses remains, and these featherses are ukly. They are very dear. Who buyses dheses? Whatever bees, I only want beautiful featherses. I want featherses of every desolation, to-morrow.
>
> *Signed,*
>
> YOU KNOW WHO.[4]

And what better picture of the relationship between oriental master and servant could be drawn than the young English aristocrat's account of his interview with Mohammed Ali, the Egyptian viceroy.

> The Pasha wanted his pocket handkerchief and looked about and felt in his pocket for it, but could not find it, making various exclamations during his search, which at last were answered by an attendant from the lower end of the room —"Feel in the other pocket," said the servant. "Well, it's not there," said the Pasha. "Look in the other then." "I have not got a handkerchief," or words to that effect, were replied to immediately "Oh yes you have."—"No, I have not."—"Yes, you have." Eventually this attendant, advancing up to the Pasha, felt in the pocket of his jacket, but the handkerchief was not to be found; then he poked all round the Pasha's waist, to see whether it was not tucked into his shawl: that would not do. So he took hold of his Sovereign and pushed him half over on the divan and looked under him to see whether he was sitting on the handkerchief; then he pushed him over on the other side. During all these manoeuvres the Pasha sat as quietly and passively as possible. The servant then, thrusting his arms up to the elbow in one of the pockets of His Highness's voluminous trousers, pulled out a snuff-box, a rosary, and several other things, which he laid upon the divan. That would not do either; so he came over to the other pocket and diving to a prodigious depth, he produced the missing handkerchief from the recesses thereof....[4]

CURZON'S SEARCH FOR MANUSCRIPTS led him first to the monastery of Baramous which was inhabited, he says, "by two or three poor-looking monks." He went at once to the keep of the

[3] "Notice of Lord Zouche," in the Miscellanies of the *Philobiblon Society* (1874), pp. 14 ff.

[4] *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant* (1955), pp. 79–82.

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monastery where he saw forty or fifty Coptic manuscripts on cotton paper, "lying on the floor to which several of them adhered." There was only one leaf of vellum, which he took possession of. Baramous contained nothing else, he reports, except some curious lamps of very ancient glass and "a multitude of ravenous fleas" who drove him out of the half-ruined cells where he was trying to sleep.

He next visited Souriani where one of the typical and famous (or, according to some, infamous) incidents common to book-collecting in the 19th century took place. The Syrian monastery at the time of Curzon's visit in 1837 was inhabited by some 15 monks, including an "old blind abbot." In the keep of the convent, Curzon found manuscripts lying about on the floor and in niches in the walls. One of these was a "superb manuscript of the Gospels with commentaries by the early Fathers of the Church; two others were doing duty as coverings to a couple of large open pots or jars which had contained preserves, long since evaporated. I was allowed to purchase these vellum manuscripts, principally, I believe, because there were no more preserves in the jars."

But Curzon was after other manuscripts which he had heard about in Cairo; and though the "old blind abbot" denied their existence, the young visitor resorted to what he calls "the opener of the heart"—namely, a bottle of *rosoglio* (a spirit distilled from raisins, sugar, etc.) which soon had the abbot "bland and confiding." "Take another cup of rosoglio," Curzon said, leading the conversation round to the monastery's books. The ruse worked. The old monk, now inebriated, took his visitor to a small room which was filled with manuscripts two feet deep. Curzon was able to help himself to armloads of manuscripts which now form one of the chief treasures of the British Museum's Oriental collection. He describes the scene vividly:

> First there was the old blind grey-bearded abbot, leaning on his staff, surrounded with three or four dark-robed Coptic monks, holding in their hands the lighted candles with which we had explored the secret recesses of the oil-cellar; there was I, dressed in the long robes of a merchant of the East, with a small book in the breast of my gown and a big one under each arm; and there were my servants armed to the teeth and laden with old books. . . .

In fact, Curzon had so many books that he could not get them all into the camels' saddlebags. He had to leave one large volume which was later acquired by Archdeacon Tattam. The volume Curzon left behind was an edition of a number of lost works of Eusebius and was dated 411, one of the most precious manuscripts discovered in Egypt. The Eusebius, together with some 1,000 Coptic and Syriac manuscripts acquired by Curzon, Tattam, and other British bibliophiles, is now in the British Museum.

CURZON continued his search for precious manuscripts in other monasteries farther up the Nile, arriving eventually at the Convent of the Pulley (sometimes called the Convent of the Virgin) in Middle Egypt. He was welcomed here by the monks wading out to his boat stark-naked and carrying him ashore on their backs. To reach the monastery, which was built on a pinnacle on the banks of the river, he had to climb up a rock-chimney, the way being led by the abbot who held up his robe in his teeth to permit him to find a foothold inside the chimney. He, says Curzon, "appeared like a spread eagle above my head." Under the Englishman came the captain of the vessel, naked except for his immense turban, and under the captain some twenty nude sailors with their clothes tied in a bundle on their heads. Having climbed up inside the rock for about 120 feet, Curzon found himself on a narrow slippery ledge overlooking a precipice. From here he had to shin up an overhang to reach the rock path that led to the monastery itself. His party, the whole lot of them naked, arrived, entered the monastery, and "frightened the ladies who lived there terribly, except that the younger ones took more time in adjusting their veils before fleeing." It is unlikely that they had ever before seen some 20 or more naked men emerge from inside the rock; and nor had the mongrel dog who greeted Curzon's arrival with a growl, "only to be assailed with a volley of stones and invectives by the ladies whom he had intended to protect."

Despite all his efforts to reach the Convent of the Pulley where he had been told "there was a great chest full of ancient books on vellum," Curzon was unable to acquire any *MSS* here, so he pushed on to Thebes where, he tells us, he took up residence in a cave made habitable by another Englishman, one Hay: whence the name of the cave, "Mr. Hay's tomb." One of Curzon's visitors at this time was a Copt "whose poverty was such that his costume consisted of nothing but a short shirt, or tunic, made of a

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homespun fabric of goat's hair, or wool, and a common felt skull-cap, with some rags twisted round it for a turban. "This Copt was none the less a well-educated man who wrote and read both Arabic and Coptic and knew the history of the nearby monastery which had only recently fallen into ruins and been abandoned by the last of the monks. The Copt also revealed that the monastery library was still in existence, concealed in one of the ancient subterranean temples. He agreed to take Curzon late at night to avoid spies and led the Englishman into a great sepulchral hall covered with hieroglyphics and full of statues of the ancient gods.

Obviously this temple had been converted at a very early time by the Egyptian Christians into a church where they could meet secretly, perhaps at the time of the persecutions of Diocletian and Decius. At all events there was a stone altar at the end of the hall and here Curzon began to examine the manuscripts of the monastery library by the light of three candles. In the middle of his perusal of an ancient volume, the subterranean temple was filled with "a fearful howling, like the roar of a hundred wild beasts . . . as if legions of infernal spirits were let loose upon us." This was too much for Curzon, his guide, and the guide's little son, all three of whom rushed out of the temple pursued by a donkey. Curzon obviously loved a good story so much that one wonders about that "ancient volume" and the existence of the monastery library. On the other hand, a donkey's hee-hawing in a subterranean temple at midnight might have genuinely sounded like "the roar of a hundred wild beasts." Who knows. . . .

CURZON NEXT VISITED the White Monastery. The year was 1838, yet his description of the convent and his reception there could apply to my visit 130 years afterwards. Now as then, the priests and their families live in houses inside the great ruined basilica, the women peer out from the windows of hovels built up in corners among the ancient ruins, and children toddle about between the fallen columns, 30 of which once lined the central aisle. Now as then, the visitor gazes up at the half-domes of the apsis with the original frescoes, trying to make out the portraits in the poor light, but recognising the splendid Christ Pancrator over the altar. The decay and neglect of this oldest and finest Roman church in Egypt continue; and only the fact that it was built by Roman (or Roman-trained) masons of a fine white-dressed stone ensures that it will last perhaps for some other traveller 130 years hence.

Three monks resided in this great monastery, once the headquarters of Senoudi. They told Curzon that 100 manuscript volumes of their library written on vellum and gazelle skins had been destroyed a few years previously by the Mamelukes. If this was true, and there is not the slightest reason to doubt the story, then the world probably lost some of the most precious manuscripts ever written, as gazelle skin was only used for the earliest Christian literature; and since the White Monastery was once the largest and richest of the Egyptian monasteries, it undoubtedly housed a large library of the gospels, including those works like *The Gospel According to the Egyptians* now lost in whole or in part. Certainly the monastery archives would have contained a bible at least as old as the *Codex Sinaiticus*, but all such manuscripts, particularly if written on vellum and gazelle skin, would have been looted by the Mameluke soldiers and made into ornaments for their women, saddle bags, purses, and so on.

Yet Curzon brought back from Egypt some 127 manuscripts which were eventually deposited in the British Museum's Oriental collection. He has, of course, been criticised for robbing the wretched monks of the Nitrian monasteries where he acquired most of his treasures; and his account of how he plied the abbot of the Syrian convent with *rosoglio* has been quoted (by the Germans) as an example of British perfidy. In actual fact, of course, he saved many precious books from going into the bread ovens or from rotting to pieces on the floor of the cellars; and he pioneered the way for professional orientalists like Henry Tattam, Archdeacon of Bedford, to rescue the last remnants of the literature of early Christianity.

THE DIFFERENCE between these two bibliophiles—the young and gay aristocrat and the elderly, sober archdeacon—is a fascinating aspect of the story of desert travel. Henry Tattam, incidentally, did not write his own account of his 1838–1839 expedition in the Wadi Natrun, but left this job to his travelling companion, a Miss Platt who "very reluctantly" printed (for private circulation only) what she calls "a few notes hastily penned on the spot." One gets the impression that this fretful and prejudiced old maid should never have left her English village to face the world across the

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English Channel, for she continually scolds about the transport, accommodations, and food in the countries she passed through on her way with Dr. Tattam to Egypt. She describes her bout of sea-sickness sailing along the west coast of Italy as though the Italians were to blame and her opinion of a French doctor who prescribed *potage* for her "exhaustion by fasting and illness" is "a remedy worthy of a Frenchman." So she remained in her cabin "with no other amusement than feasting on thoughts of home: the smallest circumstance connected therewith is inexpressibly sweet when two thousand miles away." Miss Platt wrote this off Sicily, 1,000 miles as the crow flies from England. "My mother's face is ever before me; and I cannot but feel thankful that she is not sharing with me the misery of this week."

At all events, Dr. Tattam and Miss Platt safely crossed the Mediterranean, landed at Alexandria, where "a sudden and violent cramp seized me, which increased to such a degree that I was removed to my bed in agony." However, Miss Platt managed to be present that evening at the dinner table, though only able to eat small portions of the four-course meal. The party was off next day on donkeys, from which the ladies frequently fell to the ground to be picked up by the donkey-boys. After wandering about for a few leisurely weeks visiting monasteries up and down the Nile (all of them in an extreme state of dilapidation and none with any *MSS* which excited much interest), Dr. Tattam and Miss Platt with a fairly large caravan of camels, donkeys, and armed Bedouin crosed the Libyan Desert to the monasteries of the Natrun Lakes. It seems to have been during the crossing of the desert (inhabited at that time by flocks of ibis, cranes, wild geese, ostriches, herons, and other large birds—all having been exterminated in the last fifty years) that Miss Platt suddenly felt a stirring in her sensible British soul and surrendered herself a little to a world which had not been shaped in the image of a middle-class Victorian God. She fell in love with the desert.

Dr. Tattam, in the meantime, was eagerly waiting his opportunity to examine the libraries of the four Nitrian monasteries and to obtain as many rare *MSS* as he could. Curzon, of course, had passed through only a year or so previously, but the rumours of the treasures he had had to leave behind must have reached the English clergyman. Miss Platt, in fact, makes a haughty reference to "the European who visited the convent and made such strenuous efforts to obtain possession of it [*i.e.*, a very beautiful Coptic-Arabian Dictionary] that they were almost afraid to show it to travellers." The European was, of course, Robert Curzon, equipped with his bottles of *rosoglio*.

TATTAM BEGAN his researches at the Syrian monastery. Miss Platt comments: "There is no doubt as to their possessing a great quantity of *MSS*; but the principal difficulty is to discover the most likely method of getting possession of them.... Their avarice is so excessive that the most distant idea that they were of any value to Europeans would be sufficient to induce them to fix an exorbitant price on them, or withhold them altogether." Despite the unwillingness of the monks to part with the only objects of any value left to them, Tattam managed to obtain a splendid haul of ancient scriptures written on vellum, the books today being worth several hundred thousand pounds. Among his finds was the hitherto unknown treatise by Eusebius of Caesaria, the big volume which Curzon had been unable to find room for in his saddle bags.

From the Western Desert, the archdeacon and his companion journeyed to the Eastern, or Arabian, Desert, in order to visit the monasteries of Antony and Paul. Poor Miss Platt was not allowed inside the former convent and so had to camp outside the walls where she watched the Bedouin reject the food lowered in baskets on the grounds that the monks had not crumbled the bread sufficiently in the broth. "A terrible uproar ensued," she says, as the soup went up and down in the basket, until the

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monks, who had learnt from centuries of experience how to deal with these mendicants, finally gave way and crumbled up the bread as ordered. In the meantime, of course, the broth had got cold, but this did not bother the sturdy beggars down below half as much as not having their bread served to them in the traditional manner. One rather admires the spirit of men who place their dignity above their hunger.

Archdeacon Tattam, in the meantime, was examining the library, but found no manuscripts which he had not already obtained from the Nitrian convents. What he did find was a young monk who begged to be freed from his unendurable imprisonment in this desert fortress, giving as his excuse his longing to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem whither the Tattam caravan was bound. The other monks refused this novitiate permission to leave the monastery, no doubt for the very good reason that he was the only young and active member of the convent. The archdeacon upheld their decision.

> He [*i.e.*, the novitiate] was almost frantic when he found that his entreaties were in vain; and the brotherhood suspecting he would attempt to follow us, locked him in his cell, where he sobbed and howled in the most piteous manner.... It was really affecting to see the poor dejected prisoner leaning over the little balcony from which he was permitted to take a last look at our caravan as it moved off, while the tears streamed down his pale and haggard face.

Miss Platt was not a very vivid or even an interesting writer; but her account of this young monk's anguish is perhaps the most significant of all the stories told by travellers who visited the Egyptian monasteries from the 14th to the end of the 19th century.

AFTER LEAVING St. Antony's, Archdeacon Tattam and Miss Platt visited St. Catherine's on Mount Sinai, and while she wrote the expected purple passages about the awesome scene of the Ten Commandments, her companion examined the library of the convent. In fact, the archdeacon knew that the monastery had in its possession what is probably the most precious book in the Christian world: namely, the 4th-century manuscript of the Bible, in other words, the *Codex Sinaiticus*. No doubt Dr. Tattam had some hope of purchasing this beautiful and venerable book; and failing that, of collating the text of the gospels with other manuscripts, none of which were as old and therefore as authentic as the *Sinaiticus*. But the English scholar, though he had travelled so far, was disappointed: the old abbot evaded his request and even refused to show him the manuscript at all, until Dr. Tattam was leaving when he was allowed a quick peek. Evidently the abbot regretted to seem discourteous, but he explained that a certain Englishman "visiting the convent some time ago, had offered the sum of £300 for it; upon which he [the abbot] immediately wrote to the Greek patriarch in Cairo respecting the proposal, and, in reply, received orders that as it was so valuable not to part with it on any account whatever."

When we read the subsequent history of this famous Bible, Miss Platt's comment is quite incredible: she actually states that £300 was an "imprudently high price for things of this kind and give to the Oriental an impression that they must be of immense value." Miss Platt would have been shocked to hear that 100 years later the British Museum paid the Soviet Government £100,000 for the *Codex Sinaiticus* and that, immediately afterwards, the Americans offered twice that sum for the manuscript.

It would appear that "a certain Englishman" who had tried to buy the manuscript was Lord Prudhoe who nearly acquired it in 1828 for £250 (worth, of course, at least five times that amount today) and might even have succeeded if the patriarch in Alexandria and the abbot in Sinai had not fallen out over the division of the proceeds.

THIS, AT ANY RATE, was the account as given by Lobegott Friedrich Constantine Tischendorf who was also in the field in search of ancient manuscripts, more particularly the *Codex Sinaiticus*. The great German scholar is an engaging person, for he was both a wily as well as a humorous man and enlivens his *Travels* with many a light-hearted story. While not as young and gay as Curzon, or as old and serious as Tattam, he was one of those 19th-century Germans who combined immense erudition with a life of adventure. He belongs, therefore, with those German scholar-explorers who travelled so extensively in the desert a hundred years ago —Heinrich Bart, Gustav Nachtigal, Oskar Lenz. Tischendorf's achievements were correspondingly brilliant, among them the acquisition of many precious manuscripts from the desert monasteries, including eventually the greatest *MS* of all, the Sinai Bible.

He first saw the manuscript in the form of a

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basketful of tattered parchment leaves with which the monks were about to light their bread oven. Such was their custom. Who knows how many manuscripts had been burnt in this manner? At any rate, Tischendorf made the mistake of acquainting the monks with the value of the "rubbish" they were burning, with the result that instead of acquiring all 129 leaves of the Old Testament which were in the basket, they gave him only 43 which he presented to Frederick Augustus II, King of Saxony.

There now began among the scholars, bibliophiles, and museum directors of Europe a race to win the greatest prize of biblical literature. Tischendorf, now that the three English contestants, Lord Prudhoe, Robert Curzon, and Henry Tattam had failed, was in the lead. He was apparently the only man who knew the full facts about the manuscript. He kept the knowledge to himself, however, and waited until he was able to visit the monastery again, which he did nine years after his first visit. But his search seemed in vain. The monks denied all knowledge of the *Codex*. They were evidently telling the truth for when Tischendorf finally discovered the manuscript, it was by a piece of good luck. A young monk had it in his cell where he kept it with other old books and the coffee cups in a cupboard. The monk obviously had no knowledge of the value or significance of the book which was unbound and wrapped in an old red cloth.

> I unrolled the cover and discovered to my great surprise not only those very fragments which fifteen years before I had taken out of the basket, but also other parts of the Old Testament, the New Testament complete, and, in addition, the Epistle of Barnabas and a part of the Pastor of Hermas. Full of joy, which this time I had the self-command to conceal from the steward and the rest of the community, I asked, as if in a careless way, for permission to look over it more at leisure. There by myself I could give way to the transport of joy I felt. I knew that I held in my hand the most precious Biblical treasure in existence—a document whose age and importance exceeded all that of all the manuscripts which I had ever examined during twenty years' study of the subject.[5]

The scholar now proceeded to transcribe the *Epistle of Barnabas* even though, as he says, his lamp was dim and the night was cold. It is this devotion of the German, alone in his cell in January 1859, that one recalls on visiting St. Catherine's today and groping one's way into a guest room which is provided with a broken-springed bed, a wash-bowl, and enamel jug, and an electric light which goes out about nine o'clock at night. It is difficult to appreciate or imagine the conditions in which Constantine Tischendorf copied the *Epistle of Barnabas* which excited him so greatly since scholars had been searching for the original Greek version for centuries. The *Epistle* was stated to have been held as "sacred writing" by the first Christians, though it had been suppressed as heretical by the Gelasian Decree of A.D 494, and consequently was only known through a faulty Latin translation.

Tischendorf worked all through that and subsequent nights copying the *Epistle* and another "heretical" book called the *Pastor of Hermas*, and then tried to get permission to take the precious volume to Cairo to copy all 110,000 lines of it—"of which a great number were difficult to read, either on account of later corrections, or through the ink having faded, and that in a climate where the thermometer during March, April, and May is never below 77° of Fahrenheit in the shade. No one can say what this cost in fatigue and exhaustion."

Now comes the curious and controversial part of the *Codex Sinaiticus* story, for Tischendorf having got the abbot's permission to have the manuscript sent from Sinai to Cairo (a special camel rider did the return journey of 500 miles in nine days), next inveigled the archbishop and monks into allowing the document to be taken to St. Petersburg "*under the form of a*

[5] *Codex Sinaiticus . . . Tischendorf's story as related by himself* (1934), pp. 27–8.

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loan, to have it copied as accurately as possible." I underline the phrase "under the form of a loan," because the statement proves that the *Codex* was, in the last analysis, stolen from the monastery by the connivance of Tischendorf, aided and abetted by the Grand Duke of Russia, Prince Lobanow, Russian ambassador to Turkey, and eventually the Czar, Alexander II. Tischendorf could hardly deny that he tricked the monks since his original letter to the head of the monastery promising to return the manuscript was carefully kept by the archivist and is now pointed out, with obvious rancour, to every visitor to the library.

The *Codex* was presented as a gift to the Czar at the Winter Palace of Tsarskoe-Selo in November 1859, while St. Catherine's received as compensation just over £1,000 and a number of Russian decorations for the Patriarch and the abbot of the monastery.

But in fairness to Tischendorf one must admit that he was strongly influenced not only by the ignorance of the monks, who had not the slightest interest in the *Codex*, but by the real danger to the manuscript if it remained in their hands. The monks, of course, were at the time not in the least indignant about losing their book to the Czar of Russia, as imperial head of the Greek Orthodox Church; they only became indignant some 80 years later when they learned that the old book which had laid for years in a cupboard was worth £100,000.

THE WHOLE CONTROVERSY is curious, for one might ask what difference does the actual *possession* of this manuscript make to anybody. It has been published in facsimile and is available therefore for scholars anywhere in the world to consult. The original, of course, is an object of great beauty to bibliophiles; but judging from the number of visitors who come expressly to see the exhibit case in the manuscript gallery of the British Museum, the *Sinaiticus* does not excite anything like the interest of the Rosetta Stone or the Egyptian mummies. Yet, according to Tischendorf,

> "I would rather," said an old man, himself of the highest distinction of learning, on the occasion of the conferring of a doctorate on me by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, "I would rather have discovered this Sinaitic manuscript than the Koh-i-noor of the Queen of England."

One assumes that this academician had never gone very far from his study and so had never had the opportunity of discovering either manuscripts or diamonds. But what he meant, no doubt, was that scholarship gave him greater satisfaction than jewels. And certainly the Bible which Tischendorf had discovered and, in particular, the manuscripts of the two heretical books, the *Epistles of Barnabas* and the *Pastor of Hermas*, enriched the world much more than another large diamond. For at about the time that the German scholar appeared with the two "lost" books, historians were beginning to re-examine the facts about Christ, the primitive Christians, and their suppressed books. A direct result of their inquiry was, of course, the great wave of scepticism, agnosticism, and atheism which swept the late Victorian world and washed up on to the shores of the 20th century. The force of this upheaval is still being felt, if anything more strongly than ever. The old academician was right: the discovery of the *Codex Sinaiticus* was far more important and exciting than the acquisition by Queen Victoria of the Koh-i-Noor diamond. The book was to help change men's beliefs and to help change society itself. The reason was that men were now asking: "Who wrote the Bible? and when?" And: "Why were the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Pastor* suppressed if they were both considered part of holy scripture in the 4th century when the *Codex Sinaiticus* was copied out?" And again: "What books did the primitive Christians read in addition to the Old Testament and the synoptic gospels?" And: "What were their basic beliefs?"

FOR TWO REASONS, we have to go to Egypt and the Egyptian monasteries to get the answers, however incomplete, to these questions: first, because the Egyptian climate preserved the early manuscripts, even when they were buried in the graves of monks; and secondly, the monasteries where the earliest scriptures were chiefly copied and stored in the libraries were out of reach of the Church of Rome and its censors. It was for these reasons that the Greek original of the *Epistle* and the *Pastor* survived, though both had been condemned as heretical by the Western Church.

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Dennis Silk

Returning

From expansiveness and hurry
To contraction in a ship's cabin.
That, and dining-room heat,
Induce an extraordinary torpor.
I do not remember the weeping Arabs yesterday:
Told, today, of their harbour goodbyes,
I could only stare at Mike in amazement.
Our cabin lies immediately over the propeller—
Or so it seems—and it tires me
To work with the propeller all night.
We're sailing toward London, that heavy foreign sound,
In *The Adana*, from Haifa—
Ornate Turkish salons and halls
Like a dream of international finance,
Talk about money across glass tables.

II

The slightly doped passengers
Look strange to the working crew.
They defend themselves behind Turkish,
At stations crouch and laugh,
One polishes a window while his friend talks.
Even the purser defends himself from us,
Changes money but real language is in his fingers,
Below deck no doubt talks also.
Waiters understand half only what we say,
Answer, sometimes, with dishes.
As for me, I've the dictionary of the propeller.

III

We drink wine with the dancer of forty-five
Waiting to be discarded for all her power.
She is coarsened and perhaps true.
A beautiful Arab in a cheap European suit
Joins us—colt's first day out,
He's got a job in Paris.
These careless transients, back in the cabin I think,
Haven't been polished to a town-shine.

IV

And it is London underneath in the propeller,
That's what I fear.
Once past Lyons the heavy weather begins,
The fog of sacrifice.
I say, Mother, forgive
Blood-connections, the floundering, the body's drag, water,
And to my sister
What are you waiting for, so noble and foolish,
In the shoe-shine city?

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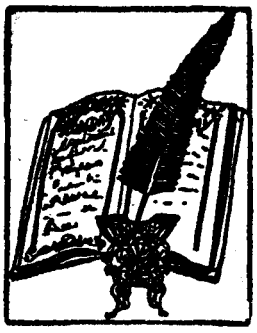

Column

I HAVE A FEELING that it might be unwise to allow Joe McGinniss' book, *The Selling of the President* (Deutsch, 30s.), to fall into the hands of British politicians before the next general election. It might put ideas into some of their heads and, reading this account of the magic arts of television as applied to politics in the United States, they might begin to wonder why politicians in this country should not also be their beneficiaries.

For *The Selling of the President* is an account of how a gigantic conjuring and confidence trick was performed on the people of the United States, with results which may easily affect the course of world history. The trick was to convince the American people, or a sufficiently large proportion of them, that despite their own experience of him, Richard Nixon was the man they wanted to be their President and to direct their destinies for at least four years.

Stated so simply, there may not seem, to English readers, to have been much in it. After all, there have been worse Presidential candidates than Mr. Nixon and, after his first year in office, there is no compelling reason for thinking that there have not been worse Presidents. And in any case, did he not have the enormous advantage of opposing a party which had been responsible for the election to office of the most hated President of modern times?

In such circumstances, why should Mr. Nixon have had doubts about winning? But in the United States in 1968 things did not look quite so simple either to him or to his well-wishers. For to millions of American people, Republican as well as Democrat, the G.O.P.'s candidate looked essentially a shop-soiled piece of goods, already a one-time loser in a Presidential campaign, who in a long political career had won a widespread reputation for trickery and duplicity and at one time, after his further failure to become Governor of California, seemed to be finally condemned, as he himself accepted, to total political oblivion.

Roger Ailes, the producer responsible during the election campaign for presenting Mr Nixon to the American people on television, put the matter rather differently, but with an even sharper sense of his candidate's deficiencies, and equally, of the obstacles which he himself had to overcome.

> Let's face it, a lot of people think Nixon is dull. Think he's a bore, a pain in the ass. They look at him as the kind of kid who always carried a book bag. Who was forty-two years old the day he was born. They figure other kids got footballs for Christmas. Nixon got a briefcase and he loved it. He'd always have his homework done and he'd never let you copy.
>
> Now you put him on television, you've got problems right away. He's a funny-looking guy. He looks like somebody hung him in a closet overnight and he jumps out in the morning with his suit all bunched up and starts running around saying, "I want to be President." I mean this is how he strikes some people.

Not very promising material, clearly, for a television producer whose task was to make Richard Nixon's presence felt, and to make it loved, in every American home. There was the awful danger that the closer you brought such a man to people, the more they might recoil from him. And yet all of Mr. Nixon's well-wishers, including Mr. Nixon himself, were agreed that a successful television performance was essential to his election and that only television could overcome the disabilities which had prevented the American people from taking him to their hearts. He had to be sold to the electorate as you sell soap or a new automobile.

IT WAS NATURAL, therefore, that one of Mr. Nixon's first steps in his campaign was to form a "media and advertising group" and to equip it with the lavish funds required to make Mr. Nixon loved. Its first member was Len Garment, a partner in Mr. Nixon's New York law firm, and he in turn recruited two dazzling luminaries from Madison Avenue, Harry Treleaven, who had spent eighteen years with J. Walter Thompson, the largest advertising agency in America, and Frank Shakespeare, who had been equally long with CBS.

To these men the task of getting Mr. Nixon elected President of the United States presented an almost entirely technical problem, to which politics were scarcely relevant, and they had no doubt that with the means at their disposal, and their own expertise, they could solve it. What was needed was to endow Mr. Nixon with dignity and charm, like some great American corporation for whom its customers are always its first concern, with warmth and spontaneity, with ease and friendliness in his dealings with his fellow men, in fact with nearly all the qualities he conspicuously did not possess, and there was no reason why, with the correct camera and lighting effects, careful rehearsal and selection of studio audiences, and the employment of the most advanced television

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techniques, the job should not be done successfully.

Yet at moments even their hearts failed them. They not only had Mr. Nixon on their hands; they also had Mr. Spiro T. Agnew. What this meant they first learned by watching a filmed interview with him made a week after the Republican convention. The interview ran like this.

"'It must have really been a thrill to have been picked for Vice President. Were you happy?'

'The ability to be happy is directly proportionate to the ability to suffer,' Agnew said. His tone indicated he might doze before finishing the sentence, 'and as you grow older you feel everything less.'

He stopped. There was silence on the film. Then the voice of the interviewer: 'I see.'"

This would not, the group agreed, sell anything, much less Mr. Agnew, and even less Mr. Nixon. Even their own medium seemed to have turned against them.

"'It looks like you're looking through a Coke bottle,' Garment said.

'And he comes across as such an utter bore,' Treleaven said. 'I don't think the man has had an original observation in his life.'

'He is rather nondynamic,' Garment said.

Frank Shakespeare was up now and pacing the back of the theater. 'We can't use any of this,' he said. 'That picture quality is awful. Just awful. And Agnew himself, my God. He says all the wrong things.'

'What we need is a shade less truth and a little more pragmatism,' Treleaven said.

'I think Dexedrine is the answer,' Garment said."

From such despair they were rescued by a reflection of Treleaven's. "One bright spot, you see Agnew and it makes you realise how good Nixon is."

YET AFTER ALL, no one cared much about Mr. Agnew, and at that time no one could have guessed that he would achieve a certain usefulness as a kind of *doppelgänger* through whose mouth Mr. Nixon might speak the thoughts he was too cautious to utter himself. Indeed, to the "media and advertising group" not even Mr. Nixon was the most important thing; for them, the election was important as a demonstration that, in the electronic age, television had become the most important factor, that the medium really had become the message and that everything else was simply adventitious. To prove this, they demanded of Mr. Nixon a degree of self-sacrifice such as few politicians are or have been capable of; that is to say, they required of him the total sacrifice of himself, of his personality, of his ideas, his policies and, equally important, of his physical appearance, his voice, his gestures.

Ideas and policies were dangerous because on television these provoke in the audience a tendency to argue and disagree, which is a hostile and aggressive reaction, inhibiting the instinct to love and cherish to which the programme was designed to appeal. In the ideal programme the performer, for this is what Mr. Nixon was, would say as nearly as possible nothing at all which was meaningful, but he would say it with warmth and sincerity. And even this lack of content had to be carefully modified and adjusted to suit the composition of the particular audience it was aimed at, for there are ways of saying nothing that will appeal more to some audiences than others and there are some which are capable of giving offence if delivered in the wrong tone, at the wrong time, in the wrong place, and without some indication that to the speaker they are emotionally if not intellectually significant. Every tone of Mr. Nixon's voice had to be calculated, every bead of sweat on his forehead counted and if possible neutralised, the shades and volumes of his facial and cranial structures painstakingly studied, every motion and gesture of his limbs and body disciplined, so that nothing would prevent his appearing as they wanted him to be to the millions of Americans who watched him night after night in their homes.

It would be difficult not to admire, as a *tour de force*, the meticulous care which was devoted to all these aspects of Mr. Nixon's television appearances, all the more so because any sign of it had to be equally carefully eliminated, so that everything should appear fresh, natural, spontaneous, unforced. *Ars celare artem* was the motto of Mr. Nixon's producers and as best he could he imitated them, though without any natural talent to assist him in doing so. But it would be equally difficult to ignore that all this effort was devoted to reducing to a minimum the political content of what was essentially a political act and to deprive it of meaning except as a performance. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that its object was simply to create what is commonly called a "better public image" of Mr. Nixon, with his own virtues enhanced and his weaknesses diminished; it was rather to substitute an entirely different image of him, a kind of identikit of which every feature corresponded, not to anything in Mr. Nixon himself, but to the supposed emotional needs and demands of his audience. Thus, for instance, that strain of aloofness and reserve which is a distinctive feature of Mr. Nixon's somewhat enigmatic character was eliminated from the identikit because the American people does not like enigmas and because it marred the image of a Nixon who was by nature as warm, friendly

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and approachable as they would wish their President to be.

MR. NIXON'S CAMPAIGN was intended, by the media men, to demonstrate the ascendency of electronic politics. Did it in fact succeed in achieving its object? On the assumption which, initially at least, seems to have been shared by Mr. Nixon himself and his advisers, that only the arts of television, correctly applied, could win him the election, it did. He submitted himself to all the disciplines and demands of the medium, adopted the *persona* required of him so successfully that by the end it almost, though never quite, became natural to him, and the election was indeed won.

Yet there were features which, from the point of view of the media men, marred the completeness of the demonstration. First of all, there was the behaviour of the candidate himself. At the beginning of the campaign, the most humble and submissive starlet could not have been more obedient to their demands but by the end he, and his political advisers, were beginning to show an unacceptable measure of independence and even presuming to criticise and interfere with the performances devised for him. It was almost as if they thought they were using the medium instead of the medium using them. But even worse, as the campaign reached its end and his carefully calculated television schedule mounted to its climax in a gigantic four hour *Telethon*, the large initial lead which Mr. Nixon had built over his opponent began to dwindle instead of increasing, so that finally it was doubtful if he was going to win at all and when he did so it was only by the narrowest of margins. It was more like a close shave than a triumph.

So that Mr. Nixon's victory had not supplied conclusive proof that today politics is merely a branch of the advertising industry and that the White House is in the gift of Madison Avenue. On the other hand, the media men could comfort themselves with the thought that, if Mr. Nixon won so narrowly even with their help, what would have happened if it had been given to his opponent. For by their standards Hubert Humphrey's television programmes were the work of amateurs and Mr. Humphrey himself strictly a ham; he talked far too much, he even cried in public, and what was worse he introduced policies and principles into his programmes.

Yet even in this respect something seemed to have gone wrong. A half hour television show of Hubert Humphrey called *The Mind Changer* was, says McGinniss, "awful" in many ways. "It showed Humphrey and Edward Muskie crawling down a bowling alley in their shirt sleeves. It showed Humphrey wearing a stupid fisherman's hat and getting his lines snarled on a lake near his home and it took shameless advantage of the fact he has a mentally retarded granddaughter. It was contrived and tasteless. But it was the most effective single piece of advertising in the campaign," simply because "it said again and again that Hubert Humphrey, at least, is a person. Here he is sweating, laughing, crying, out in the open air. The contrast with Nixon was obvious. Nixon, who depended on a television studio the way a polio victim relied on an iron lung...."

MR. MCGINNISS' book is very short, is extremely, sometimes wildly, funny and it has no degree of proper respect for the President of the United States. But it seems to me to say more about the working of political processes in modern democracy than whole libraries of more ponderous and pretentious volumes. *The New York Times*, in a review, suggested that it was a 60-second commercial compared with Theodore White's 90-minute special on the same subject, and added that today (in Marshall McLuhan's words) "the commercials are always better than the programmes in between."

I am not sure whether the lesson one should draw from it is one of despair or hope, but I am sure that the subject to which it is devoted, which is the influence, open or concealed, of television on democratic political processes, is one that deserves far more serious study than it has hitherto received. The lesson of despair I draw from *The Selling of the President* is that the political power and the techniques of television are already so far advanced that, unless they are controlled, they will in a few years become uncontrollable. The lesson of hope one might draw is that it is still not yet too late and that television is still not capable of the truly magical art of making something out of nothing.

When the campaign was all over, the media men sat down to discover where things had gone wrong.

The most important factor, they concluded, was that their product was human and, unlike cigarettes or breakfast cereals, resisted their efforts to sell it. "We had the basic problem of Nixon's personality. There were certain things people just would not buy about the guy. For instance, he loves to walk on the beach, but we couldn't send a camera out to film him picking up seashells. That would not have been credible...." Perhaps, in the long run, the last frail hope of democracy will rest on the incapacity of human beings to comply with the specifications required for the perfect political television programme.

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Zola

The Genius of "Germinal" — By IRVING HOWE

EACH LITERARY GENERATION fashions its own blinkers, and then insists that they allow unimpeded vision. My generation grew up with a mild scorn for the writers of naturalistic fiction who flourished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some of them we took to be estimable and others talented: we did not mean to be unfair. Many naturalists had a strong feeling for social justice, and if irrelevant to their stature as writers, this seemed to their credit as men. Zola's great cry during the Dreyfus Affair could still rouse us to admiration. His great cry could stir even those of us who had reached the peak of sophistication where Flaubert was judged superior to Balzac, Stendhal to Flaubert, and all three, it need hardly be said, to Zola. For Zola was tendentious, Zola was rhetorical, Zola was coarse, Zola knew little about the new psychology. With such wisdom, we entered the world.

Everyone had of course read Zola earlier, in those years of adolescence when all that matters in our encounter with a novel is eagerly to soak up its experience. Then *Germinal* had stirred us to the bone. But later we learned that literary judgment must not be defiled by political ideas, and Zola, that damp and clumsy bear of a novelist, became an object of condescension.

IT WAS WRONG, hopelessly wrong—like those literary fashions of our own moment which two or three decades from now will also seem all wrong. Reading *Germinal* again, and reading it with that emotional readiness which middle age can sometimes grant, I have been overwhelmed by its magnitude of structure, its fertility of imagination, its re-enactment of a central experience in modern life.

Still, it should be admitted that if we have been unjust to Zola these last few decades, some of the blame must fall on his own shoulders. He talked too much, he pontificated too much about Literature and Science, he advertised himself too much. We are accustomed in America to bemoaning the redskin dumbness that overcomes so many of our writers when confronted with a need to theorise about their craft, and behind this complaint of ours there is often a naïve assumption that European writers have commonly possessed the range of culture we associate with, say, a Thomas Mann. It is not true, of course. What had Dickens or Balzac to say about the art of the novel? As for Zola, there can hardly have been a modern writer so repeatedly confused about the work he was doing.

Consider the mechanical scientism to which he clung with the credulousness of a peasant in a cathedral; the ill-conceived effort to show forces of heredity determining the lives of his characters (so that a reader of *Germinal* unaware of the other volumes in the Rougon-Macquart series could hardly understand why Etienne Lantier should suddenly, without preparation or consequence, be called "a final degenerate offshoot of a wretched race"); the wilful absurdity of such declarations as "the same determinism should regulate paving-stones and human brains"; the turgid mimicry with which Zola transposed the physiological theories of Dr. Claude Bernard into his *Le Roman expérimental*. About this side of Zola, the journalist preening himself as scientist-philosopher, Angus Wilson has remarked:

> ...he must present his artistic method as though it were a solid intellectual scheme, lend that air of culture and education—of which in reality he knew himself to be deficient—to present as a logical theory what was in fact the form in which his individual genius expressed itself.[1]

[1] Angus Wilson, *Emile Zola: a Critical Study* (1952).

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Yet we ought not to be too hasty in dismissing Zola's intellectual claims. If his physiological determinism now seems crude, his sense of the crushing weight which the world can lower upon men remains only too faithful to modern experience, perhaps to all experience. If his theories about the naturalistic novel now seem mainly of historical interest, this does not mean that the naturalistic novel itself can simply be brushed aside. What remains vital in the naturalistic novel as Zola wrote it in France and Dreiser in America is not the theoretic gropings towards an assured causality; what remains vital is the massed detail of the fictional worlds they establish, the patience—itself a form of artistic scruple—with which they record the suffering of their time.

IN LOOKING BACK UPON the philosophical improvisations of those late 19th-century writers who were driven by conscience to surrender their Christian faith and then to improvise versions of rigid mechanism and spiritualised secularism, we like to suppose that their "ideas," once so earnestly studied by literary scholars, were little more than impediments they had to put aside, dead weight on the tissue of their work. You ignore Dreiser's pronouncements about "chemisms"; you agree with Huysman's remark about Zola, "Thank God he has not carried out in his novels the theories of his articles, which extol the infusion of positivism in art. . . ." There is of course something to be said for this view of the matter, but less than we commonly suppose. For the announced ideas behind a novel, even those thrust forward by the author as direct statement, ought not to be confused with the actual play of his intelligence. We may judge these announced ideas as tiresome or inert or a mere reflex of fashion; we may be irritated by their occasional appearance, like a mound of fossil, along the path of the narrative; yet in the novel itself the writer may be engaged in a play of intelligence far more supple than his formal claims lead us to suppose. A reductive determinism is what Zola flaunts, as when he places Taine's not very brilliant remark, "vice and virtue are products like sugar and vitriol," on the title page of *Thérèse Raquin*; but a reductive determinism is by no means what controls *Germinal* and *L'Assomoir*. When we say that a work of literature "takes on a life of its own," we mean in part that the process of composition has brought textural surprises, perhaps fundamental shifts in perspective, which could not have been foreseen by studying the author's original intention.

Even among ideas we regard as mistaken, sharp discriminations must be made when trying to judge their literary consequences. A writer infatuated with one or another kind of psychic charlatanism is hard to take seriously. A writer drawn to the brutalities of fascism rouses a hostility that no creed of aesthetic detachment can keep from spilling over into our feeling about his work. But when writers like Zola and Hardy and Dreiser were attracted to the thought of Darwin and Huxley, or to popular versions of their thought, they were struggling with serious and urgent problems. They may have succumbed too easily to the "advanced ideas" of the moment, precisely the kind that date most quickly. Still, they were grappling with questions that gave them no rest, just as a half-century later Sartre and Camus would be grappling with the questions raised by existentialism, a school of philosophy that may not last much longer than deterministic scientism but which has nevertheless helped to liberate valuable creative powers. As Harry Levin[2] has said in partial defence of Zola:

> Surely no comparable man of letters, with the exception of Poe, had tried so hard to grasp the scientific imagination. His contemporary, Jules Verne, led the way for writers of science fiction to tinker with imaginary gadgets. Science for them has been an Aladdin's lamp, a magical fulfilment, an easy trick. . . . For Zola it was much tougher than that; it was behaviour under pressure; and the literary experimenter was both the witness of the behaviour and the gauge of the pressure.

IN SO FAR AS A WRITER'S IDEAS enter his literary work, they matter less for their rightness or wrongness than for their seriousness. And at least with some writers, it is their seriousness which determines whether the ideas will release or block the flow of creative energies. Zola shared with many late 19th- and early 20th-century writers what I have elsewhere called a "lust for metaphysics." Christianity might be rejected, Christianity might be remembered, but its force remained. Among those who abandoned it there was still a hunger for doctrine, a need for the assuagements of system. They wished to settle, or continuously to worry, the problem of their relation to the cosmos. To us this may seem a curious need, since we are more likely to be troubled by our relation to ourselves; but in the last half of the 19th cen-

[2] In Professor Levin's scholarly study of French 19th-century fiction, *The Gates of Horn* (1963).

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tury the lust for metaphysics was experienced by people whose moral and intellectual seriousness cannot be questioned.

ONE LARGE TENDENCY in 19th-century literature, coursing through but not confined to romanticism, is an impulse to spiritualise the world, to distribute the godhead among numberless grains of matter, so that in a new if less tidy way, purpose can be restored to the cosmos and the sequence of creation and recreation be made to replace the promise of immortality. Towards the end of the 19th century men like Zola could no longer accept transcendental or pantheist derivatives from Christianity, yet they wanted some principle of order by means of which to locate themselves in the universe; whereupon they proceeded to shift the mystery of the creation on to the lawfulness of the determined. What then frightened reflective people was something that we, in our benumbed age, seem to accept rather easily: the thought of a world without intrinsic plan or point.

The transfer from *telos* to causality, in so far as it preserved a premise of meaning, enabled writers like Zola and Dreiser to make their lives into an heroic discipline, heroic because radically at variance with the ideas they expounded. It was almost as if they were re-enacting in secular charade the paradox of Calvinism: that a belief in the utter worthlessness of man, living in a world blinded by God's grace, could yet drive the faithful to zeal and virtue.

Zola went still further than those writers who transferred the dynamic of faith into a fixity of law. Like Balzac before him, he yielded to the brilliant impiety of transforming himself into a kind of god, a god of tireless fecundity creating his universe over and over again. The 19th-century novelist—Dickens or Balzac, Hardy or Zola—enacts in his own career the vitalism about which the thought of his age drives him to a growing scepticism.

Zola's three or four great novels are anything but inert or foredoomed. He may start with notions of inevitability, but the current of his narrative boils with energy and novelty. *Germinal* ends with the gloom of defeat, but not a gloom predestined. There is simply too much appetite for experience in Zola, too much sympathy and solidarity with the struggles by which men try to declare themselves, too much hope for the generations always on the horizon and always promising to undo the wrongs of the past, for *Germinal* to become a mere reflex of a system of causality. Somehow—we have every reason to believe—Zola's gropings into the philosophy of determinism freed him to become a writer of energy, rebellion, and creation.

GERMINAL releases one of the central myths of the modern era: the story of how the dumb acquire speech. All those at the bottom of history, for centuries objects of manipulation and control, begin to transform themselves into active subjects, determined to create their own history.

Now we cannot say that this myth has gained universal acceptance in our culture, nor that those of us who register its moral claims can do so with the unquestioning credence and mounting awe we suppose characteristic of men in ancient cultures. Still, we might remember that in so far as we know Greek myth through Greek drama, we know it mediated by individual artists, and with the passage of time, mediated in directions increasingly sceptical. The myth in *Germinal*—if we agree, however hesitantly, to call it a myth—is one that may have some parallels in earlier cultures, but it takes its formative energies from the French Revolution. It is the myth of the People and more particularly, of the Proletariat. They who had merely suffered and at times erupted into blind rebellion; they who had been prey to but not part of society; they who had found no voice in the cultures of the past—they now emerge from the sleep of history and begin the task of a collective self-formation. This, of course, is a schematised version of historical reality, or at least a perspective on historical reality—which may indeed be the distinctiveness of whatever modern myths we have. Where traditional myth appears to us as trans-historical, a frieze of symbolic representation, our own take their very substance from the materials of history, magnifying and rendering heroic the actions of men in time. Some idea of this kind may have led Thomas Mann to write that "in Zola's epic," made up as it is of events taken from everyday life, "the characters themselves are raised up to a plane above that of everyday life."

The myth of *Germinal* as I have been sketching it is close to the Marxist view of the dynamics of capitalism, but to yield ourselves to Zola's story is not necessarily to accept the Marxist system. Zola himself does not accept it. At crucial points he remains a sceptic, as we may imagine Euripides to have been, about the myth that forms the soul of his action. His scepticism concerns not so much the recuperative powers of the miners, for it is his instinctive way of looking at things that he should see the generations crowding one another, pushing for life space, thrusting their clamour on to the world. His scepticism runs deeper. Zola sees the possibility that in the very emergence of solidarity—that great and terrible word for which so many have gone smiling to their death!—there would be formed, by a ghastly

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dialectic of history, new rulers and oppressors: the Rasseneurs, the Plucharts, and even the Lantiers of tomorrow, raised to the status of leaders and bureaucrats, who would impose their will on the proletariat. Zola does not insist that this must happen for he is a novelist, not a political theoretician. What he does is to show in the experience of the Montsou workers the germ of such a possibility. As it celebrates the greatest event of modern history, the myth of emergence contains within itself the negation of that greatness.[3]

AT THE CENTRE of the novel is the mine. Dramatic embodiment of exploitation, the mine nevertheless makes possible the discipline through which to overcome exploitation. But for the moment, man's nature still bows to his history, personal need to the workings of the market. The mine has a "natural" awesomeness, with its crevices and alleys, depths and darkness: its symbolic power arises organically, spontaneously, and not as a willed imposition of the writer. And then, in a stroke that does bear the mark of will, Zola creates an astonishing parallel to the miners. The mine-horses share the misery of the men, but without the potential for motivated rebellion; the mine-horses represent, as a gruesome foreshadowing and with an expressionist grossness that defeats critical scruples, what the men may yet accept or sink to.

The mine is voracious and unappeasable, a physical emblem of the impersonality of commodity production. It "seemed evil-looking, a hungry beast crouched and ready to devour the world." It "kept devouring men . . . always ravenous, its giant bowels capable of digesting an entire nation." But this suggestion of a force bursting out of the control of its creators gains its strength not merely from the intrinsic properties of the mine. Here Zola does come close to the Marxist notion that men must beware of fetishising their predicaments, they must recognise that not in mines or factories lie the sources of their misery but in the historically determined relations between contending classes. And here surely historical associations come into play which even the least literate reader is likely to have with mining—a major industry of early industrialism, notorious for its high rate of exhaustion and accident. As always in *Germinal*, the mythic and symbolic are of the very substance of the historical. And thereby Zola can fill out his myth with the evidence of circumstantiality. The more he piles up descriptions of the mine's tunnels, shafts, timbering, airlessness and dampness, the more are we prepared to see it as the setting for the apocalypse with which the book reaches its climax.

IN A FINE ESSAY some years ago William Troy remarked that the great scene in which Etienne and Catherine are trapped in the mine

> brings us back to an atmosphere and a meaning at least as old as the story of Orpheus and Eurydice. For what is the mine itself but a reintegration of the Hades-Hell symbol? The immediate and particular social pattern is contained within the larger pattern of a universal recrudescence. . . . Etienne emerges from his journey underground to *la vita nuova* of his own and of social experience.[4]

The Orpheus-Eurydice motif is there, Etienne experiences a recrudescence, though of a somewhat ambiguous kind, and the mine is surely the symbolic centre of the book. Yet we should be clear as to how Zola achieves these effects. Zola controls his narrative with one overriding end in mind, and that is to show not the way men are swallowed by their work (surely not new) nor how a hero can emerge healed from the depths (also not new) but the gradual formation of a collective consciousness. When Maheu, that superbly drawn worker, begins to speak to the manager, "the words were coming of themselves, and at moments he listened to himself in surprise, as though some stranger within him were speaking." The stranger is his long-buried self, and this transfiguration of Maheu is at least as morally significant as that of the individual protagonist gaining access to self-knowledge in the earlier 19th-century novel.

Etienne reads, Maheu speaks, La Maheude cries out: everything is changed. Gathering their strength and for a time delirious with fantasies of freedom, almost child-like in the pleasures of their assertiveness, the workers become what Marx called a class for themselves.

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[3] Is it not this note of prescience, this intuition all too painfully confirmed by recent history, which explains why Georg Lukács—the East European Marxist critic who always starts with heterodox insights and ends with orthodox dogmas—should attack Zola's work as mechanistic and passive, lacking in revolutionary dynamism? We have here a confrontation between a writer's honesty and an ideologue's tendentiousness, between Zola's myth of a collective entry into consciousness and Lukác's pseudo-myth of "socialist realism." The true myth is a story arising from the depths of common experience, the pseudo-myth a manipulation of that story in behalf of the false collective declaring itself the "vanguard of the proletariat."

[4] William Troy, "The Symbolism of Zola," in *Partisan Review*, December 1937.

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And then, with his uncanny gift for achieving mass effects through individual strokes, Zola begins to individualise his characters. He does this not to approximate that fragmented psychology we associate with 19th-century fiction but towards the end of preparing the characters for their new roles: Etienne in the pride and exposure of leadership, Maheu in the conquest of manhood, La Maheude as the voice of ancient grievance, and even the children, led by the devilish Jeanlin, who in their debauchery release the spontaneous zest that the overdisciplined life of the miners has suppressed.

THE STRIKE becomes the central action: thereby the myth of emergence takes on the sharp edge of conflict. The workers are shown in their rise to a noble solidarity and their fall to a brutal mob—better yet, in the ways the two, under intolerable stress, become all but indistinguishable. ("Do not flatter the working class nor blacken it," Zola told himself in notes for *L'Assomoir*.) And nothing is more brilliant than Zola's intuition—it speaks for his powers of insinuating himself beneath the skin of the miners—that after the horrible riot with which Book V closes, he sees the men continuing their strike, digging in with a mute fatalism, "a great sombre peacefulness," which rests far less on expectations of victory than a common yielding to the pathos of standing and starving together. Defeat comes, and demoralisation too, but only after Zola has charted with a precise objectivity the rhythms of struggle, rhythms as intrinsically absorbing for the novelist (and at least as difficult to apprehend) as those of the individual psyche in turmoil.

Again, it should be stressed that the myth Zola employs is not the vulgar-Marxist notion of an inevitable victory or of a victory-in-defeat ending with noble resolves for the future. True, he shows as no other European novelist before him, the emergence of a new historical force and he reveals the conflict that must follow; but its outcome remains uncertain, shadowy, ambiguous. The more serious versions of Marxism speak of historical choice: freedom or barbarism. It is a choice allowing for and perhaps forming the substance of tragedy. *Germinal* shares that view.

A WORK OF MODERN LITERATURE may employ a myth and perhaps even create one, as I think *Germinal* does, but it cannot satisfy its audience with a composed recapitulation of a known, archetypal story. With theme it must offer richness of variation, often of a radical kind, so as slyly to bring into question the theme itself. The hieratic does not seem a mode easily accessible to modern literature. We want, perversely, our myths to have a stamp of the individual, our eternal stories to bear a quiver of nervous temporality.

The picture Zola draws of Montsou as a whole, and of Montsou as a microcosm of industrial society, depends for its effectiveness mainly on the authority with which he depicts the position of the miners. Just as the novel is a genre that gains its most solid effects through accumulation and development of narrative, so the action of Zola's book depends on his command of an arc of modern history. If he can persuade us that he sees this experience with coherence and depth, then we will not be excessively troubled by whatever intellectual disagreements we may have with him or by our judgment that in particular sections of the novel he fails through heavy exaggeration and lapses of taste. Two lines out of tune in a sonnet can spoil our pleasure, since a short lyric depends for its success on verbal unity; but in a novel whole episodes can be out of tune without necessarily spoiling our pleasure, since an extended prose fiction depends mainly on such large-scale effects as narrative thrust and character development.

Again we reach an interpenetration of commanding myth and historical material, what I take to be Zola's great achievement in *Germinal*. A stranger arrives, slightly removed from the workers because of his superior intellect, yet required to enter their lives and ready to share their troubles. So far, the pattern of the story is not very different from that of much fiction composed earlier in the 19th century. But then comes a radical shift: the stranger, now on the way to being a leader, remains at the centre of the book but his desires and reflections do not constitute its central matter. What engages us primarily is the collective experience of the miners, the myth of their emergence. In Book V of *Germinal*, both the most original and exciting portion of the novel, this entry into consciousness is shown in its two-sidedness, and with a complexity of tone that unites passionate involvement and dispassionate removal. In his notes for the book Zola understood that he must remain faithful to his story as archetype:

> To get a broad effect I must have my two sides as clearly contrasted as possible and carried to the very extreme of intensity. So that I must start with all the woes and fatalities which weigh down the miners. Facts, not emotional pleas. The miner must be shown crushed, starving, a victim of ignorance, suffering with his children in a hell on earth—but not persecuted, for the bosses are not deliberately vindictive—*he is simply overwhelmed by the social situation as it exists.* On

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> the contrary I must make the bosses humane so long as their direct interests are not threatened; no point in foolish tub-thumping. The worker is the victim of the facts of existence—capital, competition, industrial crises.

For this perception to be transformed into a dramatic action, Zola relies mainly on the narrative increment that follows from his myth of the speechless and the symbolic suggestiveness of the mine.

IN SAYING THIS I don't mean to imply that everything which occurs in the novel is necessary or appropriate. The narrative is frequently flawed by cheap and lurid effects. Zola, as a critic has remarked, had an overwhelming imagination but only an uncertain—and sometimes a corrupted—taste. That the riot of the miners should be a terrifying event seems entirely right; that it should end with the ghastly *frisson* invented by Zola is a sign of his weakness for sensationalism. Zola tries hard to present his middle-class characters, the Hennebeaus and Gregoires, with some objectivity and even sympathy, but he usually fails. Not, I think, for the reason William Troy gives, "the inherent unsuitability of naturalism, a system of causality based on quasi-scientific principles, to the practice of literature." I doubt that local failures in a novel are ever to be traced so directly to philosophical conceptions. Zola fails because in this novel he is not interested in such people at all. They are there because his overall scheme demands it, because he feels an obligation to "fill out the picture." Sensing as much, we read these inferior portions with a certain tolerance, assuaged by the likelihood that further great scenes with the miners lie ahead. The mediocre intervals come to serve as "rests" helping Zola create or re-gather suspense. M. Hennebeau, the mine manager, is a partial exception, if only because he is a figure of power and power is always fascinating for Zola. Still, the sub-plot of Hennebeau's personal unhappiness and his envy of what he takes to be the miners' unsoiled virility is obviously weak—just how weak one can see by comparing it to D. H. Lawrence's treatment of similar material. And again, the immersion of Etienne and Catherine in the mine, once the strike has been lost, is a scene of considerable power but also marred by Zola's lack of discipline in having the body of Chaval, the girl's former lover, float horribly up to them in the darkness. Zola does not know when to stop.

TO NOTICE such flaws can be damaging, and to write as if *Germinal* were no more than the sum of local incidents could be a strategy for dismissing the book entirely. But this seems a poor way of dealing with a novel. *Germinal*, like many works of fiction, depends upon effects that are larger, more gross, and less open to isolated inspection than picking out scenes of weakness would suggest; it depends upon the large-muscled rhythms of the narrative as a whole. We are dealing here with a writer of genius who, in both the quality of his imagination and the occasional wantonness of his prose, can sometimes be described as decadent. One remembers T. S. Eliot's remark that Dickens was "a decadent genius," a remark accurate enough if the noun is stressed at least as much as the modifier. The decadence of Zola, which has points of similarity to that of Dickens, comes through in the excesses of local episodes, the vulgarities of particular paragraphs, the flushed rhetoric with which Zola seeks to "reinforce" material that has already been presented with more than enough dramatic vitality. The genius comes through in the mythic-historical sweep of the narrative as a whole. And at least this once, Zola himself knew exactly what he was doing:

> Everyone in the world [Zola wrote] analyses in detail nowadays, I must react against this through the solid reaction of masses, of chapters, through the logic, the thrust of the chapters, succeeding each other like superimposed blocks; by the breath of passion, animating all, flowing from one end to another of the work.

IF WHAT I HAVE been saying has validity, it follows that there will also be frequent episodes of brilliance—else, how could the novelist achieve his large rhythms of narration? And there are, of course, such episodes. Two kinds may be distinguished: those persuading us of Zola's authority as imaginative historian (substantiating detail) and those persuading us of his psychological penetration into a given moment of the action (illuminating detail).

The first kind is to be found mainly in his treatment of the miners at the peak of crisis. Etienne reading a Belgian socialist weekly, hastily and poorly absorbing its contents, seeking to make up for years of waste as he is "gripped by the uneducated man's methodless passion for study" and then overcome by "the dull dread that he had shown himself unequal to the task"—all this bears the thick circumstantiality of the actual. Zola knew the kind of men who were drawn to socialist politics, not merely learned bourgeois intellectuals like Marx and Kautsky, but self-educated workers like Bebel, straining with ambition and stumbling into knowledge. This command of his material is shown even more subtly in the portrayal of the inner relationships among his

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three radicals: Rasseneur, the most cautious and experienced, clearly on the way to becoming a classical Social Democrat; Souvarine, also a classical figure, though of the anarchist-terrorist kind who declares the need "to destroy everything... no more nations, no more governments, no more property, no more God or religion" and then to return to "the primitive and formless community";[5] and Etienne, the sincere unformed worker, open to a wide range of possibilities but determined—his aspiring intellectuality prods his ambition—to make a place for himself on the stage of history.

The second and more striking kind of detail shows Zola's imagination at work somewhat more freely, releasing incidents which do not depend directly on the overall design of the novel. On the simplest level there is the pathos of the mine girl Mouquette, hopelessly generous with all she has (her body to the men, her affection to almost anyone, her bared bottom to the strike-breakers), who offers Etienne a dozen cold potatoes to still the hunger of the Maheu household. It is a trifle, but from such trifles affecting novels are made. On a level hard to apprehend in strictly rational terms, there is Etienne finding himself a place to hide, after the riot, in one of the hated mines. (A little bitterly, one remember's Fabrice's chestnut tree, emblem of innocence, in *The Charterhouse of Parma*.) But the greatest of such imaginative strokes concerns the strange old Bonnemort, introduced at the outset as a ghost of a man embodying the exhaustion of the workers' lives. He has nothing to say, he is barely alive, until at the strike meeting, amid the predictably rousing speeches,

> everybody was surprised to see Bonnemort standing on the tree trunk and trying to make himself heard.... No doubt he was giving way to one of those sudden fits of babbling that would sometimes stir up the past so violently that old memories would rise from his depths and flow from his lips for hours. It had become very quiet, and everybody listened to the old man, so ghostly pale in the moonlight; as he was talking about things that had no obvious connection with the discussion, long stories that nobody could understand, their astonishment increased. He spoke of his youth, told of his two uncles who had been crushed to death at Le Voreaux, then went on to the pneumonia that had carried off his wife. Through it all, however, he never lost hold of his one idea: things had never been right and they never would be right.

Without rhetorical strain, this passage summons the losses of the past, the whole unreckoned waste that forms our history. The mode is grotesque, but for readers with a measure of historical imagination, Zola achieves something far beyond the limits of what that description usually suggests.

ZOLA IS NOT a fine writer. His style aspires towards a rich and heavy impasto rather than a lucid line-drawing, and often it is marred by excess. In *Germinal* the writing is nevertheless effective at two points: first, the passages describing the mine with that wary respect for the power of the actual a novelist must have, and second, the episodes in which he evokes the surge of conflict and the passions of enraged men. In these episodes the prose can be extremely effective, combining mass and speed—effective as long as Zola stays with his central purpose, which is to depict the sensations of men who have thrown off the discipline of society but not yet discovered the discipline of self. Nor need we succumb to any version of "the imitative fallacy"—that in its internal qualities a style must reflect the matter it is trying to convey—in order to recognise at least some correspondences as proper to the relation between style and subject. One does not write about the collapse of a mine in the style of Henry James analysing an exquisite heroine.

Zola achieves the effect of speed, but not the light or nervous speed of a Stephen Crane or an Isaac Babel. Especially in Part V of the novel, his style is that of a rumbling and heavy speed—a leaden speed. The writing is rarely nimble or graceful; the sentences are weighted with qualifiers and prepositional phrases, as well as with accumulating clauses which repeat and magnify the matter of their predecessors. Admittedly, this prose is highly rhetorical: it employs organic metaphors of anger, release and cataclysm ("nature," says Zola, "is associated with our griefs"), and it depends heavily on Zola's hoarse and rasping voice. For what he is trying to do seems decidedly risky, even from the vantage-point of 85 years later: he is giving dramatic embodiment to a collective as it disintegrates into a mob, and since he must keep his attention mainly on the group, which has of course no individuality of consciousness or will, he finds himself forced to speak in his

[5] The reader of *Germinal* may be tempted to see Souvarine as a remarkable anticipation of certain contemporary figures, and indeed he does talk as if he belonged to an esoteric New Left faction. But it should be remembered that by the late 19th century the Anarchist-Terrorist, often as popular stereotype, had become a familiar presence in European culture. Zola was here drawing upon a fund of common material, and what is notable about Souvarine is not the conception behind him but the detachment, even the ironic coolness, with which he is presented.

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own voice. That, in the actuality of composition, is the paradox the novelist must face when he tries to dramatise the conduct of a group. His effort to create an action of extreme objectivity, a plot of collective behaviour, leads the novelist to a style of extreme subjectivity in which he finds himself driven to "impersonate" the group. At its worst, this kind of writing can seem willed, an effort to do for the action through rhetoric what film-makers try to do for their stories through music. At its best, the writing has a coarse strength and even splendour, what might be called the poetry of naturalism.

STILL, IT WOULD BE FOOLISH to claim for Zola that his prose can yield the kind of sentence-by-sentence pleasure that can be had from the prose of a writer like James or Flaubert. Zola is often careless as a stylist, sometimes wanton, occasionally cheap. His trouble, however, is not that his prose lacks nicety of phrasing or epigrammatic neatness; it is that he does not content himself with a utilitarian plainness but must reach out for the ornamental and exalted, seeking through rhetorical fancy-work to establish his credentials as a literary man. Like other half-educated novelists and journalists of the 19th century, Zola was painfully susceptible to those charms of the "literary" which he claimed to dismiss.

His style, like almost everything else in *Germinal*, is interesting mainly when considered in the large. One then encounters a phenomenon I do not pretend to understand, and which seems to be an essential mystery of literature. For long portions of the novel Zola yields himself entirely to the passions of the miners, and his prose becomes strongly, even exorbitantly, passionate. We are swept along, as we are meant to be, by the surge of men in revolt; we are with them, the starving and the hunted, and the language heaves and breaks, sweeping across us with torrents of rhetoric. But let us not be frightened by that word "rhetoric": it bears the strength, not only the weakness, of Zola's novel. Here is a passage in which Zola describes (he is always strong in parallel effects, grotesque doublings) the behaviour of the miners' children during the strike:

> The scamps had become the terror of the countryside, which they had invaded, little by little, like a savage horde. At first they had been satisfied with the yard at Le Voreux, where they rolled around in the piles of coal, becoming black as Negroes, and played hide-and-seek through the stacks of timber among which they wandered as though in a virgin forest. Then they had taken over the slag heap, where they would slide on their behinds down the bare parts, still hot with interior fires, and dart among the brambles of the older parts—hidden all day and as busy as mischievous mice with their quiet little games. Enlarging their territory still further, they fought among the piles of bricks until blood flowed; raced through the fields, eating all sorts of juicy herbs without bothering about bread, searched the banks of the canal for mudfish, which they swallowed raw, and roamed ever further afield, travelling as far as the forest of Vandame, where they would stuff themselves with strawberries in the spring and hazelnuts and huckleberries in the summer. Soon the whole immense plain belonged to them.

Rhetoric, yes; but a rhetoric which accompanies and sustains a remarkably strong evocation. The passion Zola pours out finds its match, its justification in the incident he imagines. Yet, as we read into the depths of the book, we grow aware that there is another side of Zola, one who draws back a little, seeing the whole tragedy as part of an eternal rhythm of struggle and decision. This Zola is finally dispassionate, withdrawn from his own commitments, as if writing from some timeless perch, and capable of a measure of irony towards the whole human enterprise. Zola the partisan and Zola the artist: for those who like their "commitment" straight, in the duped formulas of "socialist realism" such ambivalence is detestable. But I take it to be a sign of Zola's achievement. If there has ever been a novel concerning which one might forgive a writer his unmodulated passions it is *Germinal*; yet precisely here Zola's "scientism" proves to be an unexpected advantage, enabling him to achieve an aesthetic distance that gives the book its ultimate austerity.

THERE IS STILL ANOTHER doubleness of response in *Germinal*. Hardly a Zola critic has failed to note the frequency with which images of fecundity occur in the book, repeated scenes in which, along and beyond the margin of his central narrative, Zola displays the unplanned and purposeless creativity of existence. Henry James, in his essay on Zola, remarks:

> To make his characters swarm, and to make the great central thing they swarm about "as large as life," portentously, heroically big, that was the task he set himself very nearly from the first, that was the secret he triumphantly mastered.[6]

Now this "swarming," for many 19th-century novelists, can be a source not merely of narra-

[6] Henry James, "Zola" (1903), in *Selected Literary Criticism* (ed. Shapira, 1964).

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tive energy but also of a mindless and pseudo-religious sentimentalism. Everyone has encountered it as a special kind of fictional cant: the generations come, the generations go, etc. Asserted without irony, such declamations often constitute a kind of psychic swindle, convenient enough for novelists who fear the depressing logic of their own work or who need some unearned lilt in their final pages. That Zola does approach this kind of sentimentalism seems beyond doubt, but again and again he draws back into a baffled stoicism, evading the trap his romantic heritage has set for him. "A black avenging army" is "germinating in the furrows; soon this germination would . . . sunder the earth." But even as such sentiments fill Zola's final pages there is no simple assurance, indeed, no assurance of any kind. Despite the sense of a swarming procreation which keeps the race alive, Zola ends on a note of anguish; he does not propose an easy harmony between the replenishments of nature and the desires of men. Etienne, clumsily balancing his idealism and ambition, goes out into the world.

To one reader at least, he enters neither upon personal triumph nor the "final conflict" promised by the dialectic of history, but upon a journey into those treacherous regions of the unknown where sooner or later all men find themselves.

Orpheus

Sometimes women in Greece
In a let-go-the-lot
Bacchic frenzy of drink
Tore men to bits.
Late from Greek offices
You may be sure the men
Were only partly aware
Of their shortcomings
Or these holy necessities
Before their partly living
Was ripped out.

Sometimes they got things wrong.
They tore up Orpheus
Then tossed his head
Into the river Hebros
And it trundled down, still singing,
"Eurydice!" "Eurydice!"
Singing, the emptying skull
Like a storm-chivvied stone.
Did they weep to hear
His silence making
Upstream to the springs?

Patric Dickinson

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FILM

The Cinema's New Language

By David Mowat

FOR THOSE WHO liked their cinema new, with a tang of revolution about it, the early 1960s were a blissful cinematic dawn. A hitherto plodding form had suddenly learned to run, and the momentum was tremendous. New vistas appeared in every direction. New names flashed —Truffaut, Malle, Resnais, Godard, Fellini, Antonioni, Pasolini. New devices came to birth, each almost a historical event: the still, the jump-cut, the hand-held camera, shooting into the sun, improvisation. An unprecedented number of directors began shooting their first features. Critics began talking excitedly about a new language.

Now, in the early '70s, the momentum of most of the great names above seems diminished. A few others have appeared, and new areas (notably in Eastern Europe) have opened up. But the air of excitement has lessened, and much of the charisma has dwindled. Except for the partisans, most would admit that many previously great directors have made bad films. Once spoken by an élite, the new language has become common property: devices once exciting are now too familiar to move us. This is inevitable: nothing remains new for long. But there is another problem—the misuse of the language, based on incomprehension. If the misuse cannot soon be halted, the language, however widely known, may become a pidgin dialect.

An unpatriotic suggestion, but perhaps English (and American) directors share some responsibility for the decline. In the early '60s, when things were simpler, and directors less frequently boarded planes, the difference between the English-speaking and Continental film was strongly marked. Simply expressed, the English film had a story, and did not take many liberties with it, whereas in the Continental offering the story had to compete with "artiness," tricks of style or whatever, and sometimes disappeared altogether. Of course if you liked "artiness" and found English products unimaginative you merely called the Continental films more visually expressive. Some liked "Style," the mood and shape imposed on the film by the director, others preferred "Content," or story. Most often the Continent provided the one and the English-speaking film the other. Now the distinction has largely disappeared: many English directors have taken to Style. But the result is often unsatisfactory, and the directors themselves just do not seem to match up to their Continental counterparts. As if in sympathy the Continental counterparts seem to be falling off too.

WHY SHOULD this be? Perhaps one should try to see what may first have caused the rift, look at the big differences of the early 1960s. The Continental directors were then pre-eminent, beginning to be known internationally. Now for this international fame they had to pay—as they still do—a simple price: they had to sub-title. An English director has a potential unsubtitled audience of over three hundred million. Not so the Frenchman, Italian, or Swede; and to the U.S.A. (that giant of audiences) his language is gibberish. So he subtitled: he traded an ear for an eye—and in doing so he accomplished a truly cinematic transaction. As an international deaf-mute his gestures became more expressive: the language he used had to be eye-dominated. So the whole idea of the story came in for review. A story is usually told by mouth and heard by ear. If you are confined to a non-aural rendering, with a few lettered signs, you will probably begin to play down plot; instead you will concentrate on what can be seen, and develop from there. A character, instead of being a function of the story, becomes its perceiver. Instead of saying what happens to him you show what he sees; and what he sees is him. This simple formula the English film never grasped, when during the early '60s no English character's perceptions graced celluloid. And in the late '60s, when artiness was really in vogue, it had still not grasped this essential point: that the cinema is uniquely qualified to explore a character via his perceptions, via the quality of what he sees. English-speaking directors, not realising this, gave us *Poor Cow*, *Herostratus*, *Petulia*, which by any standards fell short of (say) *L'Eclisse*, *Muriel*, *Une Femme Mariée*. The stature of these last three is not a mystery: they were nourished with a different food, not the crumbs of a fast-staling "plot," but a genuinely cinematic diet of character and perception.

THE KEY TO THE new language, I have suggested, is character. We see the limitation or potential of a character, and we observe his relationship with his environment. We observe

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his commitment or disengagement. If the shape of the film is the structure of his perception, its content is his interaction with his environment.

This basic form can produce divergent results. In the Italian or "cool" school, the character's predicament is often the limitation of his own character. He is estranged from an environment he finds alien; or else through his own inertia he becomes aimless. This translated into the cinema becomes the slow... slow image: the tempo of life which is Antonioni's metronome, and which allows Pasolini his long, breathtaking stares. But if the Italians play it "cool," the French, with their irrepressible instinct for revolution (the editor's scissors are the modern guillotine) lean more to "bop." The hero's commitment leads him to action and triples the pace. Alternatively, disengaged, he is subject to the racing pulse of his conscience, in its turn spurred by the tempo of things around. Committed he rides fast and far; uncommitted, stationary, he is bombarded by a swirl of unpatterned events. Either way there is motion, and either way it derives from an element in his character—the factor of commitment.

The English film is not readily identified with either tradition. It likes the new language but does not bother to find a key. It is not original but eclectic, and if it likes a phrase of the new language it will seize it. But this is the director's whim, and is at the heart of the trouble. Our directors have not learned to take their points of departure from their characters. Thus unruly, over-zealous, the result is no new language but a tiresome gabble. While the film should start with character and proceed through perception to mood and style, it starts at once with its story, or (worse) with style itself, and the two, instead of being harmoniously related, wage a terrible war of attrition in which, in this mechanised age, the spectator is often the first casualty (see any of the English films mentioned above).

THE RECENT WORK OF INGMAR BERGMAN, one of the most prolific of modern film directors, seems currently to be suffering from too much hybridisation, personal paranoia and strenuous modishness to represent straightforwardly any portion of the new language. No one would deny, however, that in the 1950s, before the rush, some of his work was highly influential in changing the direction of the cinema. The film *Wild Strawberries*, for instance, made in 1955, shows clearly a character-form interaction that at the time contributed much to the undoubted novelty and power of the work, which was to be crucial in building Bergman's international reputation. It was evident when it appeared that the film represented a strong contrast to much of the cinema of the time, and the difference is perhaps worth considering.

Wild Strawberries is not about a story, but about an old Professor. The perspective of visual characterisation rather than the reporting of events necessarily cuts down on action, reducing the scope of the film to an analysis of a single day. Compared with the high-selection of the traditional film, *Wild Strawberries* selects less, reveals more; it dwells; its rhythm becomes less and less the frenzied tempo of plot, more the leisured tempo of thought. Of course events still occur (no day would be entirely without them) but they are integrated, not cumulatively but as equivalent episodes revealing something of the mind of the leading character.

So much for the general approach of the film. Its form is a rather brilliant matching of its character-content. The Professor (Alf Sjöberg) is old: this is his predicament, and this provides the tension between himself and his environment. Being old he is drawn in two opposite directions: through memory, back to his youth; through fear, forward to his death. His present tense is the fulcrum balancing these opposites: it is defined by their polarity. His orientation, his present peace of mind, will depend on his coming to terms with both ideas. The form of the film illustrates this neatly: the present tense (the objective flow) of the film stops at four principal moments to admit alternately nightmare, memory, nightmare, memory—all of which we perceive from the old man's subjective point of view: we partake visually of his predicament.

In style the film resembles the character of the old man: moody, sombre, testy and rather edgily nostalgic. But the style is not imposed on the film by the director; rather he has abdicated his position in favour of his principal character: the latter, so to speak, "directs" the form and quality of the film.

Much of the eloquence of the film derives from the power of its "new language." Here, as so often, the alteration in technique which marks the divergence from tradition has much to do with tempo. The altered (slow) tempo is more analytic, more exploratory. By avoiding "story" and substituting character-linked episodes, a new, deeper, and certainly more visual rhythm has been achieved. Specifically time itself has been expanded: it has been qualified by the reverie (self-criticism) as well as by the projection, the fantasy of the future (fear of loneliness, death).

ANTONIONI, another of the most influential of modern directors, refines this procedure much further. As with Bergman, many of his films are integrated by the central character's predica-

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ment, which is again subjected to a visual analysis. To generalise, the predicament of the character is an estrangement from an intractable or uncongenial environment. Such an estrangement ("existential" if you will) leads to an aimless predicament. Life, without aim, is non-selective, non-orientated, and therefore experienced as a series of equivalent episodes without tension, often without words, and with much consequent emphasis on mood.

L'Eclisse (1962) confines itself to a rather shorter day than that of *Wild Strawberries*. The heroine (how perfectly Monica Vitti embodied the predicament) lacks orientation; again as with Bergman the form of the film is shaped to the quality of her perception; again the structure is suspense-less, a series of equivalent episodes. The human ant-hill of the fifteen minutes of the stock-exchange crisis only emphasises the torpid drift of the remainder of the film. This noisy overactive scene depicts just the quality of "action" which the director, via his heroine, is repudiating. The ending of the film is a pure, condensed illustration of this approach taken to an extreme. Estrangement from the activity of life has proceeded to the point where even human intercourse is excluded: instead we focus merely on a series of *things*. The usual perspective of the film-as-commentary, the film *about* things, has been replaced in favour of objects in their own right: the film *is* things.

Resnais is another director who is not interested in story-telling: the texture of his films is, however, very different from Antonioni's. The difference lies in the characters. Antonioni structures his films round characters whose predicament leads them towards an aimless contemplation of their environment. Resnais prefers to use characters whose predicament (often involving a form of trauma) centres on a conflict between their present existence and some past event. As with the Professor in *Wild Strawberries* the present is unstable ("critical" in the nuclear language—a key image for Resnais). A trauma in the past, reawakened by some present event, disturbs and disorientates the equilibrium. When this happens an urgent attempt is made to come to terms with the past, and this involves what psychologists call "perseveration," persistently working over the memory of an event in the hope of finding a reorientation for the present.

This formula occurs with such regularity in Resnais' films that it is tempting to suppose that the pattern coincides with his basic notion of the structure of a film; that when discussing a script with its author, he begins to cut the cloth of the material in accordance with the shape of this basic conception. Certainly his relationships with script-writers seem to produce very consistent results.

In *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) two events, both traumatic, both flashpoints of conflict between opposing sides, stand in the past of two people of different lands who come together briefly in a love-affair. But there is little peace in this antipodal union. Their meeting reawakens in each the trauma that has scarred their past life. The fusion of the ideas of atomic destruction and of the punished liaison with the German cleaves the centre of the film. Their union leads to the specific disintegration of perception. The sovereignty of the present (as in all Resnais' major films) is threatened by the encroachment of the past. In terms of the "new language" the brilliant device evolved to evoke this schizoid condition is that of "intercutting," of moving in rapid consecutive shots from one place to another (Hiroshima: Nevers) or between the "now" and the "then" (1959: 1945). From this tension the film takes its shape. Intercutting has replaced the flabby flashback (where a close-up of the hero's eyes dissolves mistily into reminiscence) with the slap in the face of adrenal memory. The past now defines, animates, qualifies the present. The film has ceased to be a moving present, leavened with digressions, and has become instead the violent conflict of opposing modes.

Last Year in Marienbad (1961) explored a similar predicament: the disturbed present due to trauma involving again the ideas of love and death. The unity of the film is the disunity of the mind; the form is the quality of memory, the attempt by the mind to orientate an episode of the past. In addition to the method of swift transition, other devices lend their assistance to evoke the nature of memory—discontinuity, distortion, stylisation, under- and over-exposure. These and other variations from the standard practice, distortions of the cinematic norm, show the evolution of new vocabulary in response to the desire to illustrate the quality of a predicament.

Once evolved, however, there is no guarantee that a language will be treated with respect, or even with sufficient understanding. Use of the devices mentioned above may earn a film the epithets "new," "experimental," "avant-garde." At a simple level they attract attention not functionally, but solely by virtue of their novelty. At the time of writing there may be as many as a hundred such devices of which (say) ten may be readily identified as clichés. From original appearance to cliché to unremarked inclusion in the new language are three easily taken steps. At cinema's present

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gallop they can be too easily and too thoughtlessly taken.

The device of intercutting, popularised by Resnais, may now perhaps claim to be almost the definite article of the new language. The unexpectedly fast cut from one shot to another causes a jerk in perception that may have an arresting impact. It is striking, "new" (little used before 1959) and easy to do (a pair of scissors suffices). Thus it is popular where immediacy, impact, novelty are required.

In Resnais' films the technique, as I have suggested, is related to a conflict integral to a character's predicament. As used by other directors, as a passport to novelty, it has become almost meaningless—devalued by reckless inflation. In Don Levy's *Herostratus* (1968), for instance, it is invoked, nominally, to show the quality of the character's "subconscious"—how a thousand fleeting impressions, many subliminal, interreact in an individual's mind. This is fair—but arbitrary. In the first place it is a general truth, not specifically related to Max, the film's hero, and thus seems more casual than anything else. Admittedly, done with sufficient force, it is striking, but one searches in vain for the integration that character or predicament would provide. The subconscious is complex, but it is more than this—it is dynamic. It lives in a brain which belongs to a human being; it cannot be regarded independently of that human being, and of his desires, fears, etc. Clips of Hitler and Churchill newsreels are all very well and may have great emotive power for one who was then alive, to whom such events were contemporaneously accessible (such as the director of the film) and who thinks of Hitler and Churchill a great deal—but to Max (surely barely out of adolescence) they must remain arbitrary: he is not involved in them. His mood (despair, violence, sexual insecurity) cannot really incorporate material a quarter-of-a-century old. He may think about a stripper or a slaughter house (though their alternation seems rather pat) but Hitler at Nuremberg is less likely to occupy his mind than, say, the idea of nuclear war. Throughout the film one feels that an appeal is being made to our sense of novelty. The traditional film—that old Aunt Sally—is under attack, and the more urgent task of creating character is taking second place.

Then we get a film like Dick Lester's *Petulia* (1968), an attempt to grow Resnais in Hollywood which lands all too squarely in kooksville (lunchtime at Tiffany's, perhaps). Sure enough Petulia (Julie Christie) has had a trauma or two, which is apparently sufficient to lead her through a wild mosaic of present/past. But her character is so woolly (like Max: part cliché, part blur) that it can't underscore or support these intercutting fantasies. Once again, through the stylistic rainbow, a dreary plot emerges, decked with sentimental strings and a taste of fashionable violence, not to mention every prop of the leisured rich. (Fellini's *Giulietta degli Spiriti* must be largely responsible for this terrible vogue. All right, so we live in a gadget society: now tell us something else.) How much more interesting a black-and-white documentary of San Francisco would have been. Instead we have an example of the new language at its worst.

Both these films, of course, share one important feature: they are in colour. This, overriding many technical mannerisms, constitutes one of the most notable trends of the '60s, and may be responsible for profound formal differences whose influence should not be underestimated. Some of these may be worth considering.

THE CONVENTION THAT dominated the 1950s almost certainly had its origin at the box-office. The entertainment film, the family film with its good box-office prospect could afford the luxury of colour (children always prefer it). The "serious" film, with its smaller (student, etc.) audience and expectation of lower returns, could not. This crude dichotomy allowed almost no exceptions, and nobody complained. Then, towards the end of the '50s, films which slightly overlapped existing forms broke fresh ground and challenged these hitherto absolute conventions. Louis Malle's *Zazie dans le Métro* was not *quite* a children's comedy. Michael Powell's *Peeping Tom* was more than *just* a glossy horror. In fact both films were pivotal: both directors (unquestionably brilliant film-makers) had shown how colour could escape from its normal decorative haunts.

The leap, however, was not so easy. Resnais, with enormous care, survived in *Muriel* (1963). Other directors with a taste for chromatic novelty did not do so well. The public for the next few years was treated to the extraordinary spectacle of almost every major film-maker falling on his face. Some (Antonioni perhaps) just broke a toe—others looked like being permanently crippled. Bergman, Fellini, Godard started producing trash (only partisans will disagree) and even pacemaker Malle seemed to stumble. Beside earlier monochromatic work these results simply lacked impact. Resnais, in an extraordinary coup, which was also a timely (quite unheeded) warning, returned with *La Guerre est Finie* (1966) to the more tractable medium. But the rush could not be stopped. The English director had to try his luck. Gradually the lessons were learned by some: Claude Lelouch and Agnes Varda apotheosised, glorified, even conquered

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colour. Joseph Losey showed that he ranked with his Continental counterparts by coming off unscarred in *Accident* (1967). The secret was in intuition—the timing—the pace which characterised his somnolent, summery Oxford, the genuine context of his characters.

What is the difference between colour and black-and-white? Was there more than a financial sense in the distinction quietly observed by the 1950s? Of the two alternatives, most will agree that black-and-white is the more compelling, urgent, direct, while colour is leisurely, rich, relaxing. Why? People customarily have not two but three eyes: two for the present (and they never *see* anything but the present) and the mind's eye, the inward eye, which focuses on past and future. The present is always with us, always around us. Unsifted, unsorted, it awaits our classification, while the mind's eye surveys not the ceaseless flow, but the classified, developed image tray of memory (stills or newsreels) or a projection of anticipations of the future (goal-directing, danger-avoiding). The mind's eye is concerned with orientating: it deals with material already selected, not constantly flooding in, and therefore entails greater urgency, necessary impact.

The next stage is subjective, and can appeal only to individual experience. Here is the hypothesis: the present tense is always in colour, the non-present in a modified form of colour. Test it by closing your eyes and reconstructing every colour of the room you are in. If the mind's eye comes short of a complete colour visualisation it necessarily modifies colour. Now modification can extend from (say) the restrained tones of Ektachrome as far back as black-and-white. But no further: without black-and-white (or an equivalent chromatic duality) there can be no image. Black-and-white, therefore—the extreme case of colour-modification—stands, I suggest, and is apprehended as the most obvious, most convenient symbol of modified colour. So it effectively depicts the field of the mind's eye.

Is this perhaps why black-and-white has been predominantly (almost exclusively until about 1963) associated with the "think" film and colour with the "sit-back-and-enjoy" film (the film that ends when you leave the cinema)? And is this perhaps the reason why most "think" directors using colour have stammered in the new language? Why the *Times* critic after seeing *The Red Desert* (1964) was suddenly moved to announce that "Mr. Antonioni" was not an intellectual? Irrelevant perhaps, but in black-and-white "Mr. Antonioni" would never have been unmasked. Significantly the *Times* critic, in 1963, could not fault *L'Eclisse*.

To come back to character, I would suggest, tentatively, that since a character's perception is so related to his thought, his mind, his inner eye, only black-and-white can approximate this on the screen: colour sears it. But there are two escape clauses—(*1*) if film colour is severely modified, and deliberately distanced away from technicolor, or (*2*) if colour (and its equivalent, living firmly in the present) is part of the character-picture. I think that Agnes Varda, alone, has achieved the secret in *Le Bonheur* (1965). Here the luxuriant use of colour perfectly characterises the sensual, happy, present-tense-with-a-vengeance world of the hero. The character is the colour, and *vice versa*. Who but a Continental director could achieve this formula?

A FINAL POINT concerns another key concept of the new language: improvisation. Fashionable for would-be fashionable directors and "true" for those whose ears jar to set dialogue. Of course it's difficult. The question is —is it worth it at all? Unrestricted improvisation is impossible for technical reasons, to say nothing of affecting the unity of the film. Some degree of control is necessary, but the greater the inhibition the less true the improvisation can be. Set dialogue need not however be stale: Bonnie and Clyde's first encounter with C. W. Moss is as spellbinding a moment as any in the modern cinema. But two things can stale any film, bad dialogue or under-rehearsed actors. Preferring not to risk pitfalls, the director may opt for improvisation, not realising how tricky his route will still be. Improvisation is not magic. First of all any genuine improvisation will combine spontaneity of speech and action, and according to Film Rule No. 1 (decreed by human biology) in a straight fight the eye always beats the ear—movement kills words. Lelouch deals with the problem cleverly in *Un Homme et une Femme*. He sits his actors down at a table to eat, thus validly inhibiting movement, and he cuts down to filter, modifying colour, cutting out distraction. He gets away with this rather domestic improvisation which in its small way remains quite plausible (the actors naturally *want* to eat, order food, make small talk).

In the wake of this success a film like *Poor Cow* seems to approach improvisation as a modish technique rather than as a chance of letting the characters add to their own characterisation. One has the impression in this film of faked improvisation ("discuss the character of Dave . . ."), in which the freedom of improvisation is desired while the possible area is severely restricted—like saying "run around on this foot-square patch of ground." The consequence is all the negative results of impro-

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visation—semi-audibility, artificiality, aimlessness of subject-matter—without any of the positive ones—unexpectedness, development, insight. In fact the final shots of the film (close-ups of Carol White, normally an excellent actress) suggest an amateur at her first improvisation class; they are embarrassing.

Don Levy succeeds slightly better in *Herostratus*. The actors have a wider area of choice, but the plot being what it is and two characters (Max and Farson) being at best types, at worst blurs, they seem to move within a field of oddly static idiocy. Both of them do try and shake off their seemingly existential air of being film-clichés (representing Violent Youth and Conventional Authority) but they seem bound with the chain of symbol to the structure of the silly plot. Of course they contradict and repeat themselves. By cutting down on his direction and leaving them relatively free, Don Levy has left them too literally "directionless." This is nowhere better illustrated than where Farson, in the breakfast in bed scene, begins walking round Max in a series of circles, apparently locomoted by carefully enunciated invective: lacking direction (both senses) he falls into a cliché of the amateur stage. What is said, too, is often hackneyed, and more mechanical than a set script. (If a stale script is dead, stale improvisation may be positively decomposed.) These actors must be further liberated before they can spread their wings: half-tied to plot and cliché-character they flap on the ground like wounded birds, uttering platitudes and making meaningless movements.

It is the Character versus Plot problem again. Abandon plot by all means, but do it honestly—don't have a half-plot. Brilliant and compelling films have been virtually plotless—*Il Posto*, *La Notte*, *L'Eclisse*. But they do—this is their triumphant quality—they do explore a character in depth and in detail. The director (a true sign of strength) has abdicated his individuality in working out the character-perception of his hero/heroine. Thus humble he has his techniques in his hand, and uses them, like a good card-player, appropriately; he does not throw down all his trumps at once. Control is a difficult thing: too much or too little can be fatal. It must be properly understood, properly exercised. Only when technical control, control over theme and character, has been fully achieved, can genuine freedom be reached and a language spoken truly.

Forecast for a Quiet Night

a secret cone will drop in Rothiemurcus
causing not the slightest local disturbance

a quiet wind will stroke Loch Araich-linn—
an indiscretion no one can possibly notice

by dawn imperceptible frosty wrinkles
will have puckered the edges of countless
  backwaters

by dawn too a generation of mice
will have been snipped by a night-shift of owls
working separately and almost in silence

and the mild local disturbance behind the eyes
of the invalid
will have been noted only by the next of kin

Robin Fulton

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NOTES & TOPICS

Thoughts after Dover Wilson

I MET Dover Wilson only once; but it told a great deal about him. At that time I lived in Chesterton, which is a suburb of Cambridge, in an old house that stood right on the street, save for a minuscule front garden raised well above the pavement and retained by a brick wall. I used to set bedding plants in this patch, and that was what I was doing one Saturday afternoon when a very elderly man, but sharp and spry, came along smartly, stopped right beside me, and looked my house up and down as if he meant to buy it by compulsory purchase. I wasn't altogether pleased, partly because I had to work at an awkward angle so as to keep my backside out of the old boy's face. So after a bit I managed to assume an amiability I didn't really feel, and I asked if I could help. No he didn't think so: and went on with the inspection. Was he interested in the house? I asked, doing better than usual at amiability. Was it mine? he came back at me, and his manner changed a bit: I believe he'd thought I was the jobbing gardener. And then, in an open, shyish, boyish way I at once liked a lot, he said he was wondering if he'd been born in it.

"This is Professor Wilson," said the lady with him. Another octogenarian Cambridge scientist I don't know, I thought. But when he mentioned the Cambridge Press, and added, modestly but with a distinctive kind of crisp relish, "I'm an editor," the rest was easy for me, and before long we were exchanging mutual amiabilities, but agreeing not to shake hands because mine was all garden. He kept giving me a quick, creased grin a bit like a weathered bird, and then, deciding that perhaps he was born further down the road, went off as briskly as he'd come. I'm glad I watched them go down the road before returning to my trowel, because I shan't see him again.

It was a characteristic, revealing meeting: ferreting something out as usual, though this time it was his own birthplace, doing it full of gaiety and high spirits, and then off to the next thing like a shot. "I'm an editor. . . ." The full intricacy of how the new bibliography led to the new editing and so to something at least from time to time like a new Shakespeare is not for me, and probably not for this place. But one should have the major contours of it in mind, if one is to go on to see how work like Dover Wilson's raises fundamental, and gravely neglected, questions about arts studies in our universities.

It was one with his life-long zest and amiability that he should sense his work of editing as part of an enthralling and communal voyage of discovery. His engagement in it was intense and personal, and he wrote it up, in near-autobiographical terms, again and again. Perhaps the key to the whole thing, and certainly the most remarkable and exciting part of it, emerged from the work of Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, *Shakespeare's Handwriting*, in 1916. Up to this point it was thought (to the joy of all Baconians) that save for a handful of signatures, no such thing remained in existence. Since it now seemed that three pages of the manuscript of the anonymous play *Sir Thomas More* had not only been added out of the head of Shakespeare, but also written down with his own pen and fingers, a new and glittering prospect seemed to lie before the editor of any Shakespeare text. The small, fluent, characterful, not-very-legible hand of Shakespeare himself could be the key to all.

UP TO THIS TIME, one or other of the early 17th-century "Folio" editions of Shakespeare (or rather, some individual copy or copies, since even these varied a good deal one from another) had been taken as substantive text for later editions; rather than the single-play "Quarto" editions which had been published, at least for a number of plays, from quite early on in Shakespeare's career. When, as was so often the case, editors had to choose between widely variant readings or make sense of nonsense, they had little but ingenious guesswork, personal critical taste, or dubious hunches about what J. M. Robertson had called "the genuine voice or vibration of Shakespeare" to guide them. Knowing what Shakespeare's handwriting was like (always assuming, of course, that it *was* knowledge) changed all this. Putting the point quite

J. DOVER WILSON *died at the age of 87 in Cambridge on 16 January 1969. He edited the Cambridge New Shakespeare in 39 volumes between 1921 and 1967. Among his memorable critical works are* The Essential Shakespeare (*1932*), What Happens in Hamlet (*1935*), *and* Shakespeare's Sonnets (*1963*).

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schematically, where the text was in doubt the initial question could now become: How would Shakespeare himself have written out the doubtful words? If imagining the actual script suggested a valid reading, then the crux was solved, but this time on a rational principle of emendation not a guess. If, with a particular text, the method gave no results, it simply became increasingly probable that the printer's copy for the text was not Shakespeare's own papers, but something else, about which one could at once open the enquiry.

Dover Wilson made the *Sir Thomas More* manuscript his starting-point, but the second branch of the enquiry may have been the more important: and by now one can see the principle, and also the integrity, of the audaciously ambitious "New Cambridge" complete edition of Shakespeare (at first in collaboration with Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, who wrote critical introductions, and later with some textual help from, for example, Professor Ian Duthie) which Dover Wilson began to bring out, starting with *The Tempest*, from 1921. In brief, the ideal was to edit each play in the light of knowing exactly what kind of "copy" the compositor had worked from when each Folio or Quarto text was being set up; and exactly how close, therefore, that text brought one to Shakespeare's own pen as it had moved over the paper. The enthralling excitement of such possibilities often comes through in Dover Wilson's intricate textual discussions.

> ... We feel confident that often nothing but a compositor stands between us and the original manuscript; we can at times even creep into the compositor's skin and catch glimpses of the manuscript through his eyes. The door of Shakespeare's workshop stands ajar.

No one else wrote quite like that, because Dover Wilson was a scholar with a hint also, and blessedly, of the enthusiast, the evangelist.

BUT INEVITABLY there is also a good deal of speculation in the whole project; and sometimes he adopts a brisk and authoritative way with it which reminds me of how he interrupted my gardening, and which may make readers uneasy over his "We feel confident ..." and "We can now legitimately assume, ..." and so on. Nor could one overlook work by many other textual scholars, from Professor Peter Alexander to those responsible for the individual "New Arden" volumes, which has perhaps been equally important, and also less sizzlingly optimistic. Speculation, though, is now in a new field: not, vaguely, about what Shakespeare might have liked, but about the detail of the causal sequences behind each text. This is where Dover

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Wilson's individual accounts of the plays emerge from. Sometimes, they disquiet. A kind of new disintegration of Shakespeare now matches the old kind where stylistic "tests" (or hunches) shared his work out among his contemporaries. Often they are exhilaratingly persuasive. The only version we have of the *Tempest* is based on copy consisting of an author's manuscript, possibly itself based on an earlier version of the play, probably abridged in Shakespeare's own hand, and once the prompt-copy in the theatre. The "good" Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* is the result of setting from copy prepared by a mediocre scrivener revising the "bad" Quarto in the light of Shakespeare's own papers "in a state of unusual disorder." The Folio *Hamlet* was set from a transcript of the Globe prompt-book, while the "good" Quarto was the work of a compositor pressed for time, subject to a press-corrector who (like other editors) enjoyed trying his hand at a clever guess sometimes, but for all that, setting from Shakespeare's own manuscript as he gave it to the theatre. And so on.

Here and elsewhere, Dover Wilson's work has led immensely to further controversy; and one measure of this controversial element is surely his admission, repeated more than once, that in the end an editor of Shakespeare cannot avoid committing himself, after all, to critical and evaluative judgments about what reading best suits the context and its meaning, or is most likely to have come from the poet himself. But there was no hint of reluctance about this. Dover Wilson entered the field of criticism with his usual gusto. I do not myself think him an outstanding critic, though *The Essential Shakespeare* (1932) is a little classic of a general kind, and some individual essays like "The Elizabethan Shakespeare," or the Leslie Stephen lecture on Leslie Stephen and Arnold, are both lively and wise. Something has to be allowed, in reading his criticism, for the fact that he belongs to a very long time ago: he constantly speaks of Granville-Barker as a close contemporary. But two aspects of his criticism certainly deserve praise, and they also lead on to the more controversial matters which give his work an interest and topicality of a kind not usually associated with them.

First, Dover Wilson traversed the critical field with all the spry gaiety that he traversed any other, or Church Street, Chesterton, that day I saw him. *What Happens in Hamlet* (1935) was conceived from the start within a tripartite enterprise—textual essay, new edition, new interpretation—originating at one and the same time from a technical problem relating to the "bad" Quarto which he found as exciting as a *who-dunit*, and an essay in interpretation by W. W. Greg which he read in a train during the First World War and which filled him with just the same avidity. He saw no gap between criticism and scholarship. *Shakespeare's Happy Comedies* (1962), a long-delayed book which, one must admit, bears the marks of the author's great age by the time he completed it, arose out of his editing the Comedies and is as *engagé* as the editing. But: "*Happy* Comedies"—this brings out the second point. Both in his insistence that Shakespeare was no author simply, but through and through a man of the theatre, a dramatist, and in the sense everywhere in his criticism of overwhelming interest and pleasure in Shakespeare, Wilson shows that he kept hold of insights which our more critical critics (if one may so put it) are inclined to obscure in pursuit of what may or may not be a higher good.

THE STUDY OF LITERATURE has become, as everyone knows, a major or perhaps *the* major university Arts subject. It must produce thousands of graduates every year. Its claim to do this is the claim to be a vitally rewarding and humanising experience in the widest sense; and I believe in that claim. Everyone also knows that "English" as a great university enterprise does not take us any of the way towards such concerns as preoccupied Dover Wilson. Everyone knows that "textual scholarship" is not where the stress characteristically falls in a university syllabus; and most undergraduates (along with most teachers too for that matter) see it as remote from their directly educational involvements. These they see as primarily concerned with English as a matter not of technicalities and expertise, but of vital experience which enriches and deepens the psyche as a whole, through the medium simply of direct and intimate contact with the products of a great creative mind.

Excellent. But the inescapable corollary of this, which if generally admitted would transform our whole academic horizon, seems never to be taken notice of. If the study of literature has such things as this to offer, and quite without the amassing of knowledge and technicalities, then it is nothing short of iniquitous not to make the study of literature available to all. By what monstrous Act of Sequestration is it ruled that lawyers, engineers, economists, statisticians and the rest must devil away at the acquiring of technicalities, while only those privileged to read English should have the momentous and energising experiences which (we are assured) it uninterruptedly offers? No doubt many engineers and so on think their own specialty intensely humanising also. That that is open to challenge, and that many of us might incline to subscribe to the challenge, is not to the point. It is not to the point because the champions of engineer-

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ing, and of all other things save literature alone, may make bold claims, but never claim that their subjects are intensely humanising *without the grind*—without, that is, some amassment or other of intricate specialist knowledge. So if this is what can be claimed for literature, the inference is clear: every student should have access to as much of that unique subject as he can possibly be spared time for. Nor is time a factor. No one need think that there must be time for a comprehensive course, Chaucer—or Beowulf—to the Present Day. There is really no need to go down the Road to Damascus, and encounter the incomparably bright light, forty times over. Three or four authors—three or four masterpieces in fact—might leave something still to be wished for, but rightly selected and rightly approached they should suffice for the crucial reaction. Ideas that the student ought to "cover" a literature are utterly inconsistent with the fundamental claim, and can come (betrayingly) only from a wholly different conception of the subject and of its value.

If, therefore, the essential part of the study of literature is unconnected, not only with Dover Wilson's kind of intricate scholarly knowledge, but also with any other kind, then that study ought to take in every university student, on some kind of auxiliary-subject basis. But there is a fairly obvious reply to this line of thought: that one kind of professionalism does indeed exist—not textual scholarship, not literary history, not Old or Middle English—which is integral to the profoundly humanising process; and this is the "critical activity," or power to assimilate, analyse, and assess an imaginative-literature text in all its complexity. And this is usually taken for a sufficient justification of our exclusiveness now.

There are, however, two distinct convictions. One is that the critical activity is a distinctive and very educative thing; and the other, that it is so extraordinarily educative a thing as to be not only the sole professionalism either necessary to or sufficient for literary studies and the vast benefits they bring, but also such that its pursuit brings no attendant disadvantages whatever along with the advantages. None of this follows from the fact that it is distinctive and very educative; but it is usually thought to follow. If one looks again at the matter, I think one can see that most of it is not even true. The critical activity is not a necessary condition of the humanising influence of literature, in that most teachers of literature can recall a good number of students who have indeed found their work "humanising," but very much in excess of whatever extremely modest talents as critics they may have acquired in the process of doing so. But more important is what shows the critical

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discipline to be not all-sufficient, and likely indeed to bring dangers along with its benefits.

THE CRITICAL DISCIPLINE is certainly a distinctive one; so much so, in fact, that there is something disquieting in the distinctiveness. This is because to a very large extent it is precisely what its champions affirm of it: a skill independent of learning, a knowing-how without any knowing-that. There is no parallel with mathematics; the only analogy that comes to mind is with Wittgensteinian philosophy. But the philosophy of analysis has not become (save perhaps in combination with subjects of quite other kinds) an academic heavy industry; it is a small minority subject.

What is there against a discipline which, to this degree, is knowing-how in the absence of knowing-that? Second time round as it were, one can see that the strictly critical study of literature might, for all its rich potentialities, also carry with it its own risk of impoverishment. It is a widely accepted commonplace that this critical study is also (to be brief) a moral study; but—wonder of wonders—it begins to seem as if the risks and the weaknesses of the enterprise might be moral also. This brings to mind something of the repetitiousness, the occasional sense of a heavy-handed self-righteousness, and in the end I am afraid the marked dullness, of some of the "Shakespeareans" who are most emphatically and advisedly innocent of the studies that attracted Dover Wilson. The subject-matter of the critical discipline—major literature—is doubtless humane and morally enriching; but the critical discipline itself, as an activity with its own nature, and in abstraction from what it is directed upon, seems nevertheless to have some tendency towards ingraining a certain moral defectiveness. What, given normal human psychology, will be the effect on spontaneity, commitment, enthusiasm—just the qualities which a review of Dover Wilson's achievement fills one's mind with—of an extended and undiluted diet of judicial assessment? I have not seen this question discussed; but it does not concern specialists only, if it bears upon the present crisis, or part-crisis, in our universities.

PERHAPS THERE ARE STRONG arguments against making the study of literature, or at least of the native literature, into a great and central enterprise in the humanising of the whole youthful population. Perhaps, as a specialism and not an auxiliary subject, that critical discipline should not be seen as the core of the matter; should be seen less as approaching to all-sufficiency as guide to it, than as having no more than parity among other more scholarly

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kinds of intellectual activity. If so, English would at once become a minority subject, much more like philosophy or art history or, perhaps, architecture. For the moment I wish only to open these questions; but they are not opened often enough. And then, if there ought indeed to be this kind of complexity and counter-balancing, what should the counter-balancing knowledge best be? Would it go Dover Wilson's way, and take in the six Quartos of Richard III, all bad ones I believe? The New Bibliography and the New Editing have given us upward of 1,500 new readings in that play, but even so this seems unlikely. Old English declensions and Elizabethan calligraphy also seem doubtful starters. Ought it simply to be literary history? Each time the paradox is that one seems to be relying on the lesser thing to rectify the greater one. Ought it to include, perhaps, how a book is physically put together? Here is another of Dover Wilson's early excitements, and certainly none of my own students have ever known a word about it. Even Dover Wilson had to speak of himself as a man "exposed to the dangers that beset one who dares to indulge in bibliographical speculation without ever having worked a hand-press." And how many university English departments possess such a thing?

John Holloway

Letter from Paris

Roger Garaudy's Turn

"IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE to keep silent." Roger Garaudy's explosive book, *"Le grand tournant du socialisme"* (Collection Idées, Gallimard) begins and ends with this sentence. Its author has since proved how deeply he meant this when he tried to defend his position by speaking through hostile jeering which ended in icy silence at the 19th Congress of the French Communist Party (held in Nanterre in February). The "monolithic" condemnation concluded his long career as a faithful Marxist ideologue, and it stood in contrast to the protracted debate on Garaudy's "heretical" theses which went on in *L'Humanité* for three weeks before. It was surprising that Garaudy whose views had so often been attacked (and distorted) was permitted to state his case at all in the central organ of the Party—only two paragraphs of his contribution had been deleted. A long series of rebuttals and attacks followed, mainly by simple "militants" or by deputies, speaking of course in the name of the Proletariat, its healthy instincts and political acumen against a bookish intellectual divorced from reality; in the *Nouvelle Critique* there was an attempt at ideological refutation. Later, however, several letters were published which actually supported Garaudy, expressed agreement with his views and reproached the Party press for having censored and falsified them. Surely there is no precedent in the French Communist Party for such an open debate with an "erring comrade." Nothing of the kind happened when the philosopher Henry Lefèbvre left, when the editorialist Pierre Hervé broke, nor in the many other cases of heretical rebellion. The opportunity afforded to Garaudy and his supporters seemed to indicate that inside the Party there was a body of opinion in favour of reconsiderations, indeed a basis of strength for the belated import into France of the spirit of the "Prague spring" and of a "socialism with a human face."

After all, there had been a recent period of renewed serious talks with other Left-wing parties to whom the Communists did not want to appear intimidating. Garaudy had warned:

> The Party should be able to show even today in its very structure what kind of a society a victorious communism will build and how different it will be from the kind of socialism which the Soviet Russians have now brought to Prague.

To a certain extent, the search for new partners on the Left gave Garaudy some protection against total condemnation. The Party, considering its own orthodox traditions, turned out to be fairly lenient with him, and when in Nanterre some leaders like Leroy remarked that Garaudy had been given "more of a chance to correct his errors than anybody before him," it was not far from the truth. Garaudy had, therefore, some reason to hope that the Party might not want to prove itself too illiberal.

If Garaudy had any such illusions he must have become aware during the preparation of the Congress that the outcome was a fixed affair. He has been for too long a staunch Stalinist to ignore how such matters are handled and how an "open debate" quickly becomes in fact a "show" trial (happily, conducted by an apparatus which has not yet any real police power). It would seem that when Garaudy published the manuscript of his new book he was not truly aware that he was going much further in his fundamental disagreement with all party doctrine than ever before. Garaudy has not only been a Stalinist propagandist, but for decades a genuinely faithful believer in the Soviet Union, confirmed in his faith by imprisonment during the German occupation and

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by the struggles of the *Résistance*. It was for him, and has remained, a case of *"ex oriente lux."* Garaudy was deeply troubled for the first time when the Russians themselves turned against Stalinism. And he was again, and more deeply, troubled when the Czech attempt to create a "human socialism" was crushed from outside.

> The Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia implies a radical condemnation of the attempts of the French and Italian Communist Parties to find a democratic road to socialism featuring a plurality of parties, freedom of press and opinion, dialogue, and cooperation with men who want socialism but do not necessarily have to share our philosophy (*Le grand tournant du socialisme* (p. 155).

From the Khrushchev speech to the writings of the Czechs (especially Richta and Kosik), it is Eastern anti-Stalinism which has influenced Garaudy—together with the more liberal atmosphere of debate inside the Italian Party.

THERE HAS BEEN a strange relation between Garaudy and the Czech intellectuals. In the books which Garaudy wrote as the chief exponent of "dialogue with the Christians" many quotations of non-Marxists appeared which the Czechs, restricted under Novotny's heavy censorship, seized upon for re-quotation; it was a way of keeping the mind alive. How great was the disappointment among the Czechs when they met Garaudy and found him far more orthodox than his books had led them to expect! They still found him useful, but something less than inspiring or admirable. It was Garaudy, in his turn, who has been profoundly and lastingly influenced by the new Czech thinkers.

The "dialogue with the Christians" which has been for years Garaudy's speciality—he became a great connoisseur of Teilhard de Chardin—was a Party assignment. Garaudy himself took pains to prevent any Marxists who did not belong to the Party from playing any role in these discussions. But it was not just as an *apparatchik* that Garaudy became the great proponent of "dialogue." Coming from a working-class family of south-western France, Garaudy had in fact been a Christian before he became a Communist; it has been reported that he had read Kierkegaard before he knew Marx. He was more exposed than others to non-Marxist ideas and convictions, and some of these have impressed him genuinely. His is a case—far from unique in the story of communism—of an ideologue who comes to take ideas seriously. The Party has always distrusted its own ideologues, and with good reason. Garaudy first led a dialogue with Christians as the Party wished, but gradually he became the advocate of a "dialogue among Communists" which the Party abhorred, and which so far nobody has ever managed to carry on for so long as he.

The one *French* element in Garaudy's opposition was the upheaval of May 1968. As a professor in the University of Poitiers, Garaudy was close to the discontent of students and young dons; and while the Party turned against the "ultra-Left" as against a most dangerous enemy, Garaudy pleaded for "understanding."

WHATEVER his previous disagreements and discontents, his new book still came as a surprise. Suddenly the Soviet Union came under attack as being worse than under Stalin. At the same time, the United States was described as if by a follower of Raymond Aron (whose *Société industrielle* appeared in the same pocket-book collection edited by François Erval) and Daniel Bell. He was now persuaded of the coming of a "post-industrial society," and in the shrinking in both importance and numbers of the "proletariat." He now believes that the Soviet Union and U.S.A. both need profound reforms, which in the American case a "finalised capitalism" could achieve. In demanding reforms of the American and Russian system, Garaudy overlooked one little thing—he managed to forget the Party distinction between "the stronghold of imperialism" and "the fatherland of Revolution."

Still, although he went rather far in some directions, Garaudy was incapable of revising hoary conceptions. The Russians may have behaved like imperialists in Prague but—so he insists—like saviours of the Revolution in Budapest. Whatever the zig-zags or even contradictions he—like Djilas and others—has moved from totalitarian dogma to the "open society."

> The Communist Party no more than any other party can decree *a priori* that once and for all it is the "leading party." Too many Communist Parties have, after their victory, taken the place of the working class and, pretending to speak in its name, have silenced it.... The true exemplary strength is that which the Party can only exhibit in its own country. The best way of winning the masses is not to eulogise a socialism in a far-away land, disguising its vices and embracing utopia via geography, but to act in such a way that the French Communist Party could appear as the prefiguration of socialist democracy.... To admit pluralism means that other participants in the construction of socialism are not just there to cover up the dictatorship of one party (*Le grand tournant du socialisme* (pp. 283-4).

Considered outside the Party framework of orthodoxy and dogma, his general analysis is not very original, nor his conclusions very interest-

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ing. But considering the point of departure and the long road he took, I cannot help feeling that his last book is the act of a brave man. From his opposition to Stalinist "socialist realism" in favour of a *"realisme sans rivage,"* he has moved to new political and sociological opinions, and has taken large steps away from the old base of accepted doctrine.

No, ROGER GARAUDY was not the Jan Huss of Nanterre. Not only because he was, happily, not burned (and, so far, not even expelled from the Party, just divested of his functions as a Central Committee man and Director of a Marxist Institute), but because he toned down his objections in an attempt to find, yet again, some "common ground" with his accusers. His speech was considerably weaker than his book. Was this a purely tactical consideration, an effort to make the comrades follow his thought rather than to shock them? If this was his intention, he spoiled it all by attacking the Soviet Union with new and unexpected arguments. He reproached the Russians for delivering coal to Spain while the Asturian miners were on strike, for conducting profitable business with the Colonels in Greece and at the same time splitting the Greek Communist Party (of which only the pro-Russian fraction was present among the "brotherly delegations"). The new grievances took the leaders by surprise. Two days later the elder Communist statesman Jacques Duclos felt the need to reply; and his answer was that trade did not depend on political régimes, and that all this was really only co-existence in action.

THIS IS NOT the place for me to analyse the "Soviet religion" of the French Communists which has always been and remains a strong factor quite independent of any and all "facts" or "revelations." When Jean-Paul Sartre in the early 1950s wrote that to criticise Stalin meant to *"désespérer Billancourt,"* he was clearly aware of this quasi-religious link. A few of the top leaders of the Party are more critical of the Soviet Union than the hard core of "militants," but the French Communists have not been led by intellectuals as have the Italians. Many French intellectuals joined up but rather as "stars" more than as Marxists. The main defections have come from Communist economists, sociologists and political scientists, some of them assembled in the monthly *Politique*. This important difference between an *idéologue* and a *vedette* could be seen in Nanterre. The poet Louis Aragon had been as critical of the Russian occupation of Czechoslovakia as Garaudy; the weekly *Lettres Françaises* which he directs has expressed this feeling strongly. (Although it is supported by the French Communist Party, Aragon's weekly is no longer allowed in the Soviet Union where it had many subscribers.) As a member of the Central Committee Aragon had protested the condemnation of Daniel and Sinyavsky, and he appeared to be entirely in agreement with Garaudy.[1] However, he did not come to the session at which Garaudy spoke and where the applause of even a single person would have made a world of difference. It was said that he was ill. Yet he appeared fit and healthy at the next session over which he presided. Aragon's opposition suddenly appeared as the whim of an *"enfant terrible."* Here indeed was *"une vedette,"* and in total contrast to the seriousness of Garaudy. His absence and reappearance were the farcical element in this play.

For my own part, I feel that Roger Garaudy, whatever his shortcomings, whatever his past, has been the protagonist of an important struggle and that his lonely battle deserves a measure of our respect. Mr. David Caute, has condemned Garaudy (in *The Observer*) for his past record as a "neo-Stalinist intellectual gendarme." This seems to me to be less than generous. As an historian of the Communist intelligentsia, he should know that there have existed throughout the movement not only just agile party *apparatchiks*, but also true believers. Outsiders may find these beliefs repellent and incredible. But I see no reason to feel contempt for the man who spoke his mind in Nanterre against a wall of hatred and prejudice in order to defend values and ideas which he had reached painfully.

François Bondy

[1] Aragon, in his 1963 introduction to Garaudy's book on Picasso, Saint-John Perse, and Kafka, *D'un réalisme sans rivages, wrote*: "This book is an event—because of what it says and because of the man who says it, and because of its timely appearance and because it is a *gage de Pavenir*...." But when the time came to "guarantee" that future, Aragon was not there.

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The Strange Case of "Penrod" (Revised)

Or, How to Expurgate a Text — By PAUL FUSSELL

IN "Black Culture and White America" [ENCOUNTER, January] Marcus Cunliffe very tellingly depicts the intellectual nightmare occasioned by the scramble of American universities to equip themselves with plausible programmes in "Black Studies." It is all going forward, Mr. Cunliffe perceives, according to a "lurid scenario," one entailing "frantic reversals, rewriting of textbooks, revisions on a scale worthy of the Soviet *Encyclopedia*." That the ends of Black Studies may be achieved it is not merely Negro culture and history that have had to be revised: White culture and history have had to be managed as well. Consider what has been done to the text of Booth Tarkington's *Penrod* (1914).

No one would want to argue that *Penrod*, Tarkington's celebration of pastoral Indiana boyhood just before the First War, is a manifestation of a very High Culture. It belongs rather to the world of Centre Culture, where as Orwell has noticed the persisting "good bad books" reside, things like William Ernest Hornung's Raffles adventures, the Sherlock Holmes stories, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. These represent, as Orwell says,

> a type of book which we hardly seem to produce in these days, but which flowered with great richness in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries . . . , that is, the kind of book that has no literary pretensions but which remains readable when more serious productions have perished.

What honest man, condemned to solitary for his crimes, wouldn't rather read *Penrod* (or *The Education of Hyman Kaplan*, or the early works of Benchley and Thurber, or the waggeries of the late Stephen Potter) than the Highest performances of, say, George Moore or Robert Bridges, James Branch Cabell or Christopher Fry?

Not that even the reader *in extremis* would find *Penrod* everywhere satisfactory. Its small-town snobbery and complacency are sometimes oppressive. In places it's badly over-written, and occasionally the Philistine mock-literary and arch pseudo-Biblical style—Tarkington's local equivalent of Fielding's tiresome mock-heroic idiom in *Joseph Andrews*—betrays uneasiness about "literature" and what The Better Sort of People will think. But these are small blemishes. While not comparable with *Huckleberry Finn*, *Penrod* does have something of its electrifying humanity and clear-sightedness.

Believing it a book that should be placed in the hands of every young person, I was pleased when my thirteen-year-old daughter recently showed me her own paperback copy (Grosset & Dunlap Tempo Books, 1965). I turned to one of my favourite chapters, nicely titled "Coloured Troops in Action." But right away I saw that something was wrong: the chapter was now titled "Troops in Action." And it wasn't an error, for the emended chapter-title was repeated in three running-heads and in the table of contents. This alteration seemed odd in view of what the flyleaf asserted:

> This Tempo Books edition contains the complete text of the original hard-cover edition.

Clearly a serious collation was in order.

WHAT THIS REVEALED was that the paperback text has been slyly manipulated throughout to purge the evidence of Tarkington's characteristic affectionate condescension towards Negroes. And as the evidence has been secretly destroyed, so have Tarkington's wit and vigour. The text has been reduced to insipidity: we have now, as William Carlos Williams might have put it, a *Penrod* consonant with our day.

For example: at one point Penrod, confined to the tedium of the classroom, is moved by exotic sounds from outside. (My square brackets indicate material excised from the paperback edition.)

> . . . the sound was the spring song of a mouth-organ, coming down the sidewalk. The windows were intentionally above the level of the eyes of the seated pupils; but the picture of the musician

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was plain to Penrod, painted for him by a quality in the runs and trills partaking of the oboe, of the calliope, and of cats in anguish [an excruciating sweetness obtained only by the walloping, walloping yellow-pink palm of a hand whose back was Congo black and shiny].

The "picture of the musician" is no longer "plain to Penrod," nor is it at all plain to us. Indeed, the effect is now that of an author who doesn't know what he's doing. The whole point is that Penrod of course *wants* to be Black so that he can (1) eschew school, and (2) participate in that delicious music. But the emender carefully prevents Penrod's daydream from fulfilling the shape it obviously aspires to:

> Emotion stirred in Penrod a great and poignant desire, but (perhaps fortunately) no fairy godmother made her appearance. Otherwise Penrod would have gone down the street [in a black skin], playing the mouth-organ, and an unprepared [coloured] youth would have found himself enjoying educational advantages for which he had no ambition whatever.

After this, we're surprised to find that in the next paragraph *blackboard* has not been emended to *chalkboard*.

Again: in Chapter XXVI we find a group of boys lounging bored in a stable on a hot August afternoon. Present are Penrod, Sam Williams, Georgie Bassett, and their Negro friend Herman. Also present is Maurice Levy, who appears throughout the revised text curiously unaltered, remaining wholly the stereotyped "Jew-boy" of the Midwestern imagination: he is a shrewd, ambitious child animated only by images of his prospective "deportment store: ladies' clothes, gentlemen's clothes, neckties, china goods, leather goods, nice lines in woollings and lace goods." The conversation of this little group turns languidly to the theme "when I'm a man":

> "When I'm a man," said Sam Williams, "I'm goin' to hire me a couple of fellas [*original*: a couple of coloured waiters] to swing me in a hammock and keep pourin' ice-water on me all day out o' those waterin'-cans they sprinkle flowers from . . ."

Herman interrupts:

> "Ain' nobody goin' to hire me [*original*: nobody goin' hiah me] when[s] *I'm* a man. Goin' to be [Goin' be] my own boss. I'm goin' to be [Goin' be] a rai'road man."

And now these ten lines of the original are entirely suppressed:

> "You mean like a superintendent, or sumthing like that, and sell tickets?" asked Penrod.
> "Sup'in—nev' min' nat! Sell ticket? *No* suh!

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HAITI AND ITS DICTATOR

Bernard Diederich and Al Burt

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Go' be a *po*'tuh! My uncle a po'tuh right now. Solid gole buttons—oh, oh!"

"Generals get a lot more buttons than porters," said Penrod. "Generals—"

"Po'tuhs make the bes' livin'," Herman interrupted. "My uncle spen' mo' money 'n any white man n'is town."

This pleasant, visually realised, and hence instructive exchange safely past, the reviser permits Penrod to utter his next line, which appears now as if in answer to Herman's "I'm goin' to be a rai'road man":

"Well, I rather be a general," said Penrod.

A FINAL EXAMPLE: the episode of Rupe Collins, a bully who wanders into Penrod's orbit from a rougher neighbourhood. He tyrannises Penrod, who instantly adopts Rupe's sadistic mannerisms and turns to victimise his friends: "He twisted the fingers and squeezed the necks of all the boys of the neighbourhood, meeting their indignation with a hoarse and rasping laugh" precisely imitative of Rupe's. Penrod tyrannises even Herman, who responds only by laughing. In the presence of the contemptuous Rupe himself Penrod, anxious for Rupe's approval, turns on his closest friend Sam Williams and humiliates him. Rupe responds by forcing both boys to "lick dirt." At this the Negroes Herman and Verman remonstrate with Rupe—they're the only ones who do. In Tarkington's text, he answers with:

"Chase them nigs out o' here!"

This highly appropriate viciousness the righteous expurgator emends to

"Chase them out o' here!"

In the original, Tarkington has Herman answer:

"Don' call me nig. I mine my own biznuss. You let 'em boys alone."

In the revision:

"I mine my own biznuss. You let 'em boys alone."

What of course animates the scene is precisely Rupe's racial sadism, now carefully expunged. It is what motivates Penrod's belated reaction: "A sudden dislike of Rupe and Rupe's ways rose within him, as he looked at the big boy overwhelming the little one [*original*: darky] with that ferocious scowl." Penrod's altered vision and his subsequent shame are like Huck's, and he cures himself of imitating Rupe by witnessing a specific act of sadism which Tarkington has depicted in racial terms precisely to make it seem the more vicious. Rupe continues his assault on Herman:

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> "You ol' black nigger," the fat-faced boy said venomously to Herman.

Here the paperback text reads:

> "You ole ——," the fat-faced boy said venomously to Herman.

Herman and Verman, once "Coloured Troops," now—meaninglessly—"Troops," go into action, one with a scythe, the other with a lawn-mower (a nice Midwestern touch). Their vigorous retaliation against Rupe is depicted by Tarkington in a context of village Darwinism and Herbert Spencerism: Rupe, we are told, "had not learned that an habitually aggressive person runs the danger of colliding with beings [in one of those lower stages of evolution] wherein theories about 'hitting below the belt' have not yet made their appearance." Indeed, "Primal forces operated here, and [the two blanched, slightly higher products of evolution] Sam and Penrod no more thought of interfering than they would have thought of interfering with an earthquake." Tarkington's point, here as elsewhere, is Twain's: dogs, Negroes, and white boys occupy essentially the same universe, a universe happily distant from that peopled by adult Whites such as policemen, dancing and music masters, school-teachers, parents, barbers, clergymen, and other Establishment personnel. This point is effectively blunted by the expurgator, unable programmatically to make the necessary distinction between two kinds of racial diction—the affectionate and the abusive. Rupe Collins is punished for the aggressive use of language—at least he is in Tarkington's version. What he's being punished for in the revision is anyone's guess.

MY POINT REQUIRES, I hope, little elaboration. The past is not the present: pretending it is corrupts art and thus both rots the mind and shrivels the conscience. The sainted Samuel Johnson did *not* say to Garrick, "I'll come no more behind your scenes, David; for the silk stockings and white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities." What he did say was, "No, David, I will never come back. For the white bubbies and silk stockings of your actresses excite my genitals." Twain's Jim *was* called Nigger Jim. Conrad's novel *is* titled *The Nigger of the Narcissus*. H. L. Mencken *did* entertain his correspondents by using stationery headed "The American Institute of Arts & Letters (Coloured)."

Are Grosset & Dunlap's disingenuous revisions "on a scale worthy of the Soviet *Encyclopedia*"? Not quite, perhaps. But what is interesting is the way both sorts of "revisions" imply the same rhetorical scenario, one consisting of a knavish manipulator exploiting an

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ingenuous addressee. As the addressee, we are not supposed to know or—more important—care about these revisions, for we are assumed to be insecure, half-educated people mesmerised by a compound of sentimentality and fear, sensing nothing so much as the obligation to exhibit on all occasions the prescribed quantum of public shame.

A recent resolution of the American Historical Association sums it up: "The past may be manipulated in an authoritarian state, but this can never be permitted in a free society."

Fidel & the New State-Class

By John Mander

FIDEL CASTRO, according to Mr. Herbert Matthews,[1] is the first Latin American to have achieved world fame during his own lifetime. Of course Mr. Matthews, as readers of ENCOUNTER (see his long article, "Dissent over Cuba," ENCOUNTER, July 1964) will know, has an interest to declare in this matter, and readily declares it. A dispassionate observer might indeed get the impression that Mr. Matthews had invented Fidel Castro; and he would not be far wrong. Castro himself has been heard to refer irritably to "this old man who thinks he's my father" (quoted by Mr. Matthews in the present biography). The irritation comes naturally from a man who, if he has not yet claimed immaculate conception, is known to have resented his actual father as strongly as he resented the tutelage of an Eisenhower, or a Khrushchev. Still, it would be as much a mistake to attempt to psychologise Fidel away, as to take his wordy rhetoric for gospel, which is more or less what Mr. Matthews contends Mr. Theodore Draper has been doing. In that long battle Mr. Matthews comes up with several cogent points. Kremlinology, as practised in contemporary think-tanks, is wasted on Fidel Castro. When Mr. Matthews first interviewed him in the Sierra Maestra, he was most certainly not a Communist. That he was a potential *caudillo*, of great force and very Latin American type, Mr. Matthews spotted correctly and duly informed his *N.Y. Times* audience. It had been thought that Fidel was dead—killed when his boat from Mexico made its disastrous landfall. Mr. Matthews revived the man and his legend, and by so doing gave him a place in American folk-lore and Batista a nasty shock. For once, the historian had made history. One can hardly blame Mr. Matthews for sticking so doggedly to his invention.

"Invention" sounds impolite, and perhaps "discovery" would be more gracious. But one cannot help feeling that Mr. Matthews' Fidel is as much "invented" as, say, Mr. Draper's or Messrs. Huberman & Sweezy's in their frankly apologetic account—though they admit the more glaring mistakes—of the social and political structure of the new Cuba.[2] Mr. Matthews quotes a school report that credits the young Fidel with "remarkable histrionic abilities." Fidel is indeed, though not quite in the sense Mr. Bolt intended, a man for all seasons. If it suits Fidel, as it did late in 1961, not only to claim that he was a Marxist-Leninist, but that he had *always* been one—an easily controvertible fact—this is more readily understood within the context of the history of Latin American *caudillismo* (as can be gleaned from Irene Nicholson's posthumous *The Liberators*,[3] or from Lewis Hanke's immensely scholarly collection, *History of Latin American Civilisation*[4]) than of the history of the world communist movement. Thus, it may well be that in the Draper-Matthews controversy both camps have right on their side. "Objectively" (to speak in Marxist terms) Fidel has certainly brought Cuba into the Socialist camp, and is pro-Soviet enough to have condoned the Czechoslovak intervention. But at the same time it is entirely credible that Raul Castro (in a laughing comment to Mr. Matthews) should have said, "Yes, we tried to read Marx's *Capital* when we were in prison. But we threw it away after three chapters. . . ." The Latin American *caudillo* has traditionally won power through his personal qualities—bravery, panache, millenarian rhetoric. Ideological consistency has never rated very high.

But this is not to say that the *caudillo* —Bolivar, Peron or Castro—does not operate

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[1] *Castro: A Political Biography*. By HERBERT L. MATTHEWS. Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 50s.

[2] *Socialism in Cuba*. By LEO HUBERMAN and PAUL M. SWEEZY. Monthly Review Press, 54s., $5.95.

[3] *The Liberators*. By IRENE NICHOLSON. Faber & Faber, 55s.

[4] *History of Latin American Civilisation*. Edited by LEWIS HANKE. Methuen, 65s.

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according to certain rules inherent in the make-up of Latin American society. The similarity of the pattern suggests, on the contrary, a high degree of consistency. Historically, *caudillismo* was a rough and ready solution to the problem of legitimacy in the broken societies "the Liberators" left behind them. It is clear from Professor Hanke's volume and from Professor Humphreys',[5] that very little in the colonial experience of Latin America (unlike that of the Thirteen States) had prepared her inhabitants for self-government. Before Miranda, Bolivar, and San Martin (as famous, surely, in their lifetimes as Mr. Matthews' Fidel?) royal authority had been absolute. After them, no firm basis of authority remained. The oligarchs ruled, but who should rule the oligarchs? The upshot could only be territorial fragmentation, and reversion to the rule of the strongest. If a more intellectual justification was looked for, tradition dictated that the ruling *caudillo* should turn to Europe or North America for some suitable ideology to underpin his authority. The ideology in question need not be especially relevant to the circumstances of the country he ruled: but it must be new, and it must have at its back the prestige of some recently triumphant cause. Thus Bolivar and San Martin (as Miss Nicholson shows) were children of the Benthamites and the French Revolution. Later in the century, Porfirio Diaz of Mexico, and many others, proclaimed Comte's *positivisme* as their state philosophy. Peron of Argentina—and Vargas of Brazil—dabbled in Fascism. Seen in this perspective, Castro and Guevara were merely following the traditional path in proclaiming their revolution "Marxist-Leninist"—without troubling to read the Marxist classics and, indeed, keeping the genuine communists (as the two Escalante affairs show) as far as possible from the levers of power. This is one point, among many others, made by Mr. Richard Bourne in his excellent recent *Pelican* study of Latin American leaders of the present day[6]—Guevara, Frei, Stroessner, Lacerda, Kubitschek, Evita Peron. All exhibit this type of *caudillo* leadership; all tend to make up their (very varied) ideologies as they go along.

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN the slapdash amateurism of the 26 July group (which Mr. Matthews makes no attempt to conceal) and the dreary, but disciplined professionalism of the official communists could hardly be greater. But if the

[5] *Tradition and Revolt in Latin America and other essays.* By R. A. HUMPHREYS. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 63s.

[6] *Political Leaders of Latin America.* By Richard Bourne. Penguin, 7s.

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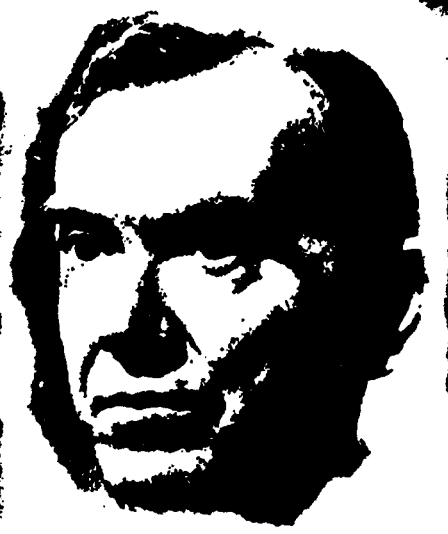

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professional communists came in handy (they were good organisers—they had organised for Batista), their ideology satisfied certain needs which existed not only in the Cuba of the 1960s, but equally in the Latin America of the Liberators, and indeed of the *Conquistadores*. The *Conquistadores* had the universal Catholic religion to sustain them in their incredible endeavours in the New World, and it is hardly conceivable that a band of mere marauders could have achieved the same results.

Similarly, the Liberators had the universal ideology of "the Rights of Man" to sustain them in their struggle against the decrepit, bigoted rule of the later Bourbons. Armed with this ideology, they did not feel themselves provincials, and were not so treated by their European or North American contemporaries. Indeed, they could feel that in making their revolutions they had put themselves in the forefront of humanity. Certainly, it is not difficult to see a certain ambiguity in their eager adoption of this new ideology. For, while they felt that they were "making it new," it is apparent to us that they were employing a borrowed ideology, often fatally ill-suited to the real problems of their continent.

It is unkind perhaps, but surely accurate, to see in this a typically *colonial* reaction. The attitude to the metropolis is ambivalent:[8] on the one hand, it and all its works are rejected as outmoded; on the other, its newest, most *avant-garde* thinkers are called in to redress the balance. It is apparent that Marxism-Lenism satisfies these ancient needs very well. It is universalist: it is anti-American; and it can still be presented as "the new thing." Without it, Castro would be just another Latin American *caudillo* lording it over a relatively insignificant island. With it, he becomes part of a universal process—indeed its *avant-garde*. Yet, from another aspect, it must appear that all he has done is to exchange one variety of colonial dependence for another.

THIS ARGUES, THEN, for a *Latin American* interpretation of the phenomenon Fidel Castro. Whether Fidel Castro, so interpreted, is more or less of a danger to the United States I am not sure. Logically, it would appear that an indigenous *Castrismo* was far more of a threat to the

[8] The same ambiguity runs through much of Latin American art and literature. For those interested in the cultural working-out of this inherited ambiguity a study of German Arciniegas' *Latin America: a cultural history* (Barrie & Rockliff, 84s.). or, in the visual arts, Leopoldo Castedo's excellent, up-to-date and splendidly illustrated *A History of Latin American Art and Architecture* (Pall Mall, 50s.) is strongly recommended.

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"American system" than an alien régime imposed by force on an unwilling society. But this is perhaps to ignore the heterogeneity of Latin American society itself (as Castro and Guevara did), and to argue that a formula that worked in one area of the continent is applicable to another with wholly different conditions (*i.e.*, Bolivia). This, too, is an ancient problem. Is Latin America one—as the titles of Professor Hanke's and Professor Humphreys' volumes assume—or is the heterogeneity so great as to render all generalisations meaningless? It will be seen that both communists and anti-communists are potential victims of this dilemma.

Theoretically, Marxism should take "objective conditions" into account, and proceed therefrom. But it is evident that in today's prevalent anti-Americanism it is *subjective* conditions that really count. Anti-Americanism is a reaction that bears little relation to the objective facts of American investment, interference, etc. In fact, it is clear that one reason why Cuba was among the top league of Latin American states economically *before* Castro was precisely that American investment was so high. But this has to be balanced against the fact that Havana (like Mexico City and Lima, "City of the Kings") was, at the time of the Declaration of Independence, a richer, more powerful, more elegant city than any in North America. The historical humiliation involved in the descent from this status to a centre of gambling and prostitution for the *yanqui* tourist is painful to imagine, and may well count for more than all U.S. imperialist activities in this century. If Cuba is competing in any kind of *avant-garde* race, it is in the subjective depth and violence of its anti-Americanism.

But there is a profounder view of the "Latin Americanism" of Fidel Castro's revolution; and an excellent analysis of it is to be found in Luis Mercier Vega's *Roads to Power in Latin America*.[9] Mercier Vega is clearly on the side of those who see Latin America as a frustrated civilisation. The states of Latin America have a common problem. The old oligarchies are not well-adapted to coping with the complexities of modern society. Yet the social progression we are familiar with in Europe—feudalism-bourgeoisie-proletariat—makes little sense in Latin America. There is no bourgeoisie, because the middle class remains largely dependent on the old oligarchic structure, and desires only to live by its traditional values. Equally, there is no proletariat because the "feudal" re-

[9] *Roads to Power in Latin America.* By Luis Mercier Vega. Pall Mall Press, 45s.

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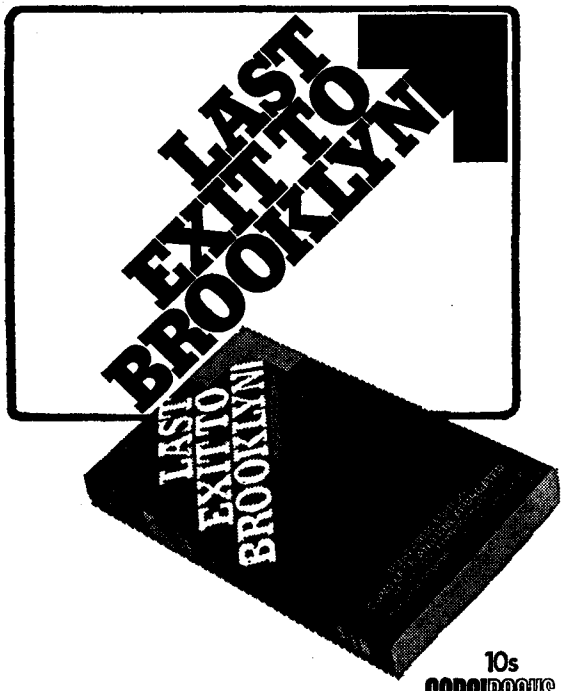

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lations that existed in the countryside have been reproduced in the context of industrial life, and trade unions are almost everywhere dependent agents of the state or the oligarchy. (Equally, one might add, there is no true peasantry in the European sense, so that even "feudalism" is an inappropriate term.)

Yet the old, oligarchic state is plainly obsolescent. What, then, is the alternative? In a brilliant analysis of the various guerrilla movements of the past decade,[10] M. Mercier Vega makes it very plain that guerrilla tactics are not among the "roads to power" he has in mind. True, in Cuba they can be said (with reservations) to have succeeded. But elsewhere, he suggests, there are only two real alternatives: the Army, and what he calls the "State-class." We are already familiar with the Army. It is in power in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia today, and provides one possible alternative (and *not* necessarily a "right-wing" one, as the Peruvian example shows). But Army régimes are generally short-lived, because armies do not possess the kind of expertise, any more than do oligarchies, which modern administration requires.

The second alternative, then, is the "State-class." This is not a middle class in the conventional Anglo-Saxon or Marxist sense (if anything, it is closer to that "New Class" of which Djilas wrote). This "State-class" is essentially an extension of that centralised bureaucracy which Latin America has known since Colonial days, laced with a portion of modern-type technocracy. It is to be seen in Mexico in the *PRI* party, where it functions efficiently and with a degree of "democratic centralism," by electing a *caudillo* for a non-renewable term of six years, and uses the rhetoric of a Revolution in which it only fitfully believes. This type of régime is more long-lasting than the military type, because it possesses greater expertise and elasticity, control of the pork barrel, and an ability to exploit the nationalist sentiments of the electorate, while pacifying the concern of the foreign investor. It needs, still, a *caudillo*-type figure who can act as arbiter between conflicting interests. It is both very modern, and very traditional. It is to M. Mercier Vega that we owe the bold suggestion that what we are seeing in Cuba is essentially the establishment of a "State-class" and a "class-State," of a type that will become increasingly common in Latin America. M. Mercier Vega has taken Fidel firmly out of the hands of Mr. Matthews and Mr. Draper, and those of Messrs. Huberman & Sweezy, and convincingly de-demonised him.

[10] *Guerrillas in Latin America.* By Luis Mercier Vega. Pall Mall, 45s.

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AUTHORS & CRITICS

A Reply to Pamela Hansford Johnson on "The Pornography of Violence"

By John Calder

THE 1950s WERE years when the bastions of censorship fell with great rapidity. The Obscene Publications Act of 1959 was first tested in the *Lady Chatterley* trial of 1961, when for the first time the defence were allowed to produce expert witnesses to testify on the merits of a book. We have since seen the virtual disappearance of most restraints on erotic and violent subject-matter in books. The Lord Chamberlain has disappeared from the theatre; television has made a series of permissive breakthroughs (indeed "permissive" seems the favourite television word these days); and Mr. John Trevelyan, the film censor, has kept pace. Nobody seems any the worse and many people are undoubtedly better off; but certainly the new freedoms of expression have not pleased everyone and Pamela Hansford Johnson [ENCOUNTER, February] is now leading the brigade that wants to swing the pendulum back.

I would find it easier to accept her claim that she "is a fairly liberal intellectual" herself if she did not claim that all attacks on her highly prejudiced and emotional book on the Moors Murder Case were intemperate. Although she gives the impression that it is only violence she would like to see censored on the mass media, and doesn't really mind about sex, she comes down pretty hard on sex too; at no point does she seem to realise that it is human beings we are talking about, many of whom find in the mass media the only real excitement in their lives; nor does she show compassion towards sexual minorities who have most to lose by any step backwards. Any tolerance she shows for abnormality is accompanied by distaste.

On first reading her article, I felt that Pamela Hansford Johnson would probably go along with me in deploring censorship of mild erotica —agreeing for instance to allow the fanciful orgiastic writings of Restif de la Bretonne, but not the cruel libertinism of the Marquis de Sade. It was cruelty and violence that she seemed to be gunning for, firmly believing that cruel books make cruel people, and remaining convinced that Ian Brady, the Moors murderer, was influenced by the sadistic and Nazi literature that he collected so avidly. Personally I see no reason to be surprised that a criminal psychopath with a sadistic nature should have a library similar to his tastes, just as a person interested in golf or religion might be expected to collect books reflecting these interests. I doubt if many people have taken up golf after reading a book, and imagine that in most cases a golfer acquires a golf library after becoming interested in the game. But I quite concede that a book read at random might well be responsible for creating a taste, although in normally adjusted people, I do not for a moment think that a person is likely to commit murder or deliberately harm the community as a result of reading. The various books in Brady's library are generally available, some of them in very large editions, and if they could have the effect on normal people that Miss Johnson claims, it is surprising that there are not thousands of sadistic murders committed every year.

THERE HAS BEEN an attempt by those pressure groups that want to have the greatest possible amount of censorship, the most conformist possible society, and the most authoritarian type of Government, to identify sex with violence; and I have heard Mrs. Mary Whitehouse repeatedly say that they are the same thing. But I doubt if many people would agree. Sex is a natural and extremely pleasurable human activity that probably has as many variations as there are numbers of people practising it. The limitations imposed on sexual activity by law are not likely to be found restricting in practice, except by a tiny minority, although there are still social sanctions against many sexual deviants.

JOHN CALDER *is joint-Secretary of the Defence of Literature and the Arts Society in London. His firm is one of the leading English publishers of avant-garde authors (including Samuel Beckett, Henry Miller, Eugène Ionesco, Natalie Sarraute, William Burroughs). Calder & Boyars were recently involved in the lawsuit (which they originally lost, but won on appeal) over Hubert Selby's novel "Last Exit to Brooklyn."*

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Violence, on the other hand, is by general consent dangerous, anti-social and, in the extremer manifestations, illegal and liable to the severest punishment we have. In the context of these remarks, I do not want to go into the Marcusian view that authority itself is violent or to point out that much welcome historical change has been created by violence and could hardly have been created in any other way. There are many forms of socially approved violence and a state often expects its citizens to adopt violent attitudes, as in war-time. It is violence by the individual that is not tolerated, and it is this form of violence that Pamela Hansford Johnson believes to stem from the fictional or simulated violence of modern communications media, violence created to sell, which inspires imitation.

To this extent I am sympathetic to Miss Johnson's point of view, even if I cannot share it, because I too am alarmed at the amount of violence in society and as anxious to see it reduced; but I cannot see how censorship can accomplish this. Miss Johnson's fallacy lies in the way she devotes her attention to the means of communication, books, plays, films and television programmes, instead of asking herself why violence exists in our society, and particularly in certain individuals, what causes it and how it can be eradicated so that the violence-prone person is rendered as pacific as Miss Johnson herself. The mass media reflect the violence in society, even when they exaggerate it, but they do not cause it. They may, however, determine the *forms* of violence, *the ways in which it manifests itself*; but they are most unlikely to be the root cause. If violence will out, it is not because a book or T.V. programme has created a need for violence, but the book or programme may show the violent person *how* to be violent. It should be our responsibility to find the cause, not to try to ban the symptoms of the disease.

AS FAR as we can see, violence is always the direct result of frustration, whether it is the frustration of a political or social minority that feels it is suppressed or discriminated against (Biafra, Bogside, or the Black Power movements); or a social class that feels it is exploited, and revolts to improve its status; or a play-group (as for instance a gang of youths whose frustration consists in there being no outlet for their natural energy, because the local authorities provide them with nothing to do and nowhere to go). In the latter case, gang warfare develops out of the boredom, or else the violence of individuals whose frustration could be financial, or sexual, or lack of opportunity which finally vents itself in some direct or indirect violence.

Violence in man is not different from the violence that we observe in nature. A trapped animal is always the most dangerous, and animals become vicious when their food or space requirements are threatened. The most difficult age for a child is when he is not yet able to communicate through words, having something to communicate, but not knowing how; and the child's frustration comes out in various forms of naughtiness if not in direct violence. The teen-agers have problems arising from emotional and sexual frustration which again leads them into irrational behaviour that often takes violent forms. We live in a society that grows by creating needs for consumer goods, securities, and pleasures. An enormous advertising industry is geared to make us want everything from toothpaste to Marilyn Monroe, and as inevitably we cannot satisfy all of these wants, it is hardly surprising that for many people frustrations are created that may find their outlets in violence. During the riots in America that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King, an important feature was that many of the rioters were breaking into shops and looting television sets, refrigerators and other consumer goods, things they wanted and could not afford. The assassination was an excuse to vent a frustration through violence and, at the same time, to acquire some of those objects that caused the frustration. Poverty is most frustrating when it co-exists with riches, and it is in those rich societies today where poverty survives for substantial minorities that we can find the highest crime rate. Crime is a form of violence that arises directly out of frustration, reflecting an inegality and a malaise in society.

THE ANSWER to violence, as any intelligent person knows from his own experience, is self-understanding, an awareness of what the frustration is, and the use of reason to cure or come to terms with it. Pamela Hansford Johnson will no doubt say that not all people are reasonable, and even that many people are incapable of being reasonable. I think this is what is wrong with her whole approach to the problem. She is writing as a member of a mandarin élite, with the basic assumption that her élite is not itself likely to behave in an anti-social way, because it has only minor frustrations and is intelligent enough to understand them, and because it has the training, authority, and intellectual equipment to make the rules for others, decide what knowledge is available and what the place of other people in society should be. What she ignores is that in a modern industrial democracy there is no longer any class or group willing to be servile, nor is it enough to create an affluent society in which the majority enjoys

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a high standard of living and is able to buy cars, tellys and fridges, but are not allowed to make their own decisions on other fundamental questions. The real class difference today is an intellectual one, and those who have bettered themselves financially still find that they are expected to be subservient to an intellectual élite that has cornered the educational opportunities in order to wield the real power, control public opinion, and make decisions affecting the lives of others. Not only has everyone a vote, but everyone is learning how to use it to get what he wants, which might not be what the intelligentsia want. And secondly, where the Party system or the natural political majority in a constituency frustrates an individual or group from having any real say in political decision-making, many activists will by-pass the polling booth and take direct action, which may mean sitting down in Trafalgar Square, Luddite vandalism, stalling a tractor on a main street, or beating up blacks. Intellectuals very like Miss Johnson first developed modern forms of protest; but the populists she fears are learning to use them, and more effectively because of their greater numbers. In the past democracy was manipulated by a minority that was often surprisingly liberal and progressive; but an intellectual élite can no longer hope to do the same thing today. They must make their fellow citizens as enlightened as themselves or face the prospect of a popular fascism taking over.

MISS JOHNSON in her article on the pornography of violence contrasts two documents, the report of the Milton Eisenhower Commission in America and that of the Working Party on obscenity set up by the Arts Council in Britain. She finds one sober and serious and the other flippant. Having been on the second of the two bodies, I am aware of how much work went into it and of how seriously the matters that worry Miss Johnson were discussed by the Working Party. Needless to say the report (now published by André Deutsch) condenses both in the interests of brevity and tact. Many things said in confidence to the Working Party could not be repeated in print. For instance, the Reverend David Sheppard did tell the Working Party in just what way he felt himself to have been "not unscathed" by reading Hubert Selby's *Last Exit to Brooklyn*. It did not consist of anything that in the eyes of the Working Party was illegal, dishonourable, or socially undesirable, although it might trouble a person of rather strict religious inclination. Mr. Sheppard (now Bishop of Woolwich) did not feel urged by the book to a violent or anti-social act, but had made a self-discovery. Closer cross-examination at the Old Bailey might indeed have made him a more effective witness for the Defence than for the Prosecution. Such omissions are occasionally glossed over.

I wish Miss Johnson had devoted more time to the evidence of Mr. James Halloran, probably the only completely professional researcher on violence in this country, because the points Miss Johnson takes from the Eisenhower Report are also present in Mr. Halloran's testimony. I am surprised that Miss Johnson did not quote the following passage in support of her argument:

> The mass media can and do influence values and behaviour. They are likely to have maximum impact when there is repetition, when emotions are brought into play, when needs or interests are being met, and where the person concerned has not been provided with an adequate set of standards or criteria against which to judge or assess the "message."

In other words the Working Party has not claimed that mass media never affect behaviour, but notes that they are most likely to influence those of lower educational standard. It was clear that if we wish to diminish violence, we must concentrate on raising the general level of sophistication so that all people are able to tell the difference between, for example, the real violence of television newsreel war-reporting and the simulated violence of a wild-Western film or a play, and are able to react to the one with horror (and I hope practical political protest), and to the other with critical judgment and some understanding of what the author or producer is trying to do. Mr. Halloran made it clear to the Committee that persons from different backgrounds and with different emotional responses would react differently to the same programme. A film showing an American Civil Rights march, for instance, would arouse pride, enthusiasm and sense of well-being in one viewer and violent anger in another. I am not advocating that society should be less homogeneous, but that people should be educated to greater tolerance and greater objectivity in their thinking. In fact the greatest *cri de coeur* in the Arts Council report is Mr. Halloran's flat statement that the annual cost in Britain of doing research into the commercial effects of communications media is at least 60 times more than the annual amount spent on all other media research, *i.e.*, the effects of newspapers, films, books, television, etc., on people's lives and behaviour. If we are short of evidence on the extent to which people imitate the violence they learn about from the mass media, it is because we will not invest the money to find the answers to the biggest problem facing modern society. Mr. Halloran says that the basic spade work is done

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and definite results could be obtained very quickly. But

> the main thing holding us back today is quite simply that not enough research is being carried out. If we want answers to our questions, we must be prepared to invest more in the research effort. . . .

WE MUST FACE a number of facts and some of them are not easy to face. The first is that Mandarinism is no longer possible in any approach to social problems. We live in a highly complex and varied society where no one is any longer going to be "told their place," how to behave or be willing to be censored by authority. Undoubtedly liberal reform has usually been brought about by a thinking minority in advance of public opinion, but this has been possible because more people have learnt to think for themselves and contrast a liberal argument against a reactionary one. The swing in opinion on Homosexual Law Reform after some years of public debate is evidence enough of the growth of intelligent thinking. If certain pressures in society become too strong (pressures such as immigration and race problems), the backlash may reverse the clock in every way, bringing in an authoritarianism that will destroy the freedom of the people who elect it. We cannot afford not to educate all classes to an awareness of where their own interest lies, and it can surely only be in a free and tolerant society where everything can be known and the general critical sense is high enough to ensure that entertainment or propaganda that is bad, vicious, or anti-social is recognised for what it is: not by an élite, whether it has authority or not, but by everyone. Surely we have reached, or nearly reached, a level of sophistication in Britain where we can trust people a little farther than we have already—at the same time attacking those black spots that need attention, like our crime-producing slums and those new towns and estates where an unthinking authority has produced homes for thousands, but forgotten to make any provision for cinemas, dance halls, youth clubs, pubs or social centres, so that there is nothing for teen-agers to do except roam the streets in the evenings looking for activity, and turning violent from boredom. I know what I am talking about. I recently staged Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* at one such housing estate—Easterhouse outside Glasgow, which has perhaps the worst reputation for violence in Britain. I had to face a riot one night because I had, in a professional production, only been able to find room for a limited number of gang boys and girls as extras. The cause of the violence was the frustration of those who felt left out of the only activity going on within miles.

I HAVE ALWAYS HAD great confidence in the creative artist finding a way to put right what is wrong with society by making it aware of evils that he detects before others think of them as evils. Needless to say it is the artist who does this who is most bitterly attacked. As Zola put it, in defending himself against his critics:

> We, the Naturalists, adorn no vileness, we teach the bitter science of life, we offer the world the high lesson of reality and truth. I know no school that has ever shown more morality, more austerity. Certainly we write not for babies and sucklings, but for the world at large, that world that is full of sin, vice, crime, deceit, and hypocrisy. While we extenuate nothing, we set down nought in malice. We simply paint humanity as we find it, as it is. We may let all be made known in order that all may be healed. And there our duty ends. It is for the leaders and guardians of the nations to do theirs.

All the more pity that when Miss Johnson finally gets round to specific targets, she attacks, not the authors of light semi-pornographic trivia or (mostly American) sex novels written to a formula that serves only to enrich their authors (books which, harmless enough in themselves, are nevertheless a complete waste of the reader's time and hardly likely to enrich his mind, enlarge his experience, or stretch his intelligence), but instead those works of art that are founded in the author's deeply-held moral conviction, sense of compassion, and anxiety about the world at large. I do not hold much brief for the *Living Theatre* where acting standards are concerned, but they are certainly sincere and concerned to dramatise and create an awareness of cruelty, injustice, and suffering. Miss Johnson considers it impudent and snobbish to regard an entire theatre audience as complacent, needing to be shocked. But we all are complacent most of the time and even the most socially conscious of us needs to be shocked and prodded into action every so often. If we do not like the method we can leave the theatre, or, if we think the experience may be too uncomfortable, we need not attend. Miss Johnson says that the "Theatre of Cruelty" is "one of the nastiest ideas that man has come up with." Nastier than pogroms or concentration camps, or genocidal wars or the Moors murders, would you say, Miss Johnson? The Theatre is a theatre and a book is a book. Neither is real. Artaud certainly intended, in his concept of the Theatre of Cruelty, to make the theatre nearer life and to destroy the audience's sense of being in a theatre and of being safe. But greater realism does not change the essential fact that people do not get killed in theatres, however realistically horrible the production, and the audience is probably much safer there than in the streets outside. Peter Brook's Artaudian productions

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in this country—which I have attacked elsewhere for other reasons—are, nevertheless, highly successful theatrical experiences that do create awareness, spread compassion, and bring about political protest. They either work in this way, or they do not work at all, and of course for many members of the audience they are just a distasteful experience, not harmful or corrupting, but distasteful. To attack Edward Bond, undoubtedly the most morally committed, and one of the two or three most talented figures in the contemporary British theatre, for dramatising and helping us to understand the aimless violence that we find among the type of youth I came to know in Easterhouse, is the best way of making sure that this form of violence will be understood less rapidly and less rapidly cured. Indeed Miss Johnson herself creates more violence than all the people she attacks put together, by encouraging the kind of emotional response to the problem that we find in those who want to treat crime by bringing back hanging, flogging, and grimmer prisons as deterrents, which of course only make those who are enemies of society more bitter and more confirmed in their enmity. At the same time her Mandarinism—if it has any influence, and I am sure it does on people who accept her arguments without going into the reasonings behind them—will tend to perpetuate the frustration of those who feel themselves to be intellectually under-privileged, and will never share the pleasures and privileges of her cultural group, but can attack them, as well as attacking tolerant attitudes and calling for more censorship.

Miss Johnson derides the Arts Council Report for its flippancy, but her own article is flippant enough. She touches on one of the key points in the working party's argument, that abolition of censorship has worked dramatically well in Denmark, bringing about a decline in sexual crime; Danish legislation has since made the abolition permanent. She does not comment on this but remarks:

> The success of the Danish experiment—it is claimed that with free-for-all pornography the sales of such material dropped (though quite why ultimately permissive persons regard this as "success" is mysterious to me)—needs some looking at in the light of October's Pornographic Fair. This appears to have attracted gigantic crowds of young Danes, exactly as we would expect.

If a saner society needs more education and with it more critical reading tastes, a drop in the purchase of rubbishy reading would seem a success to any responsible person. This does not mean that it is at all surprising that many young Danes attracted by the publicity spend an hour or so going to an erotic exhibition, just as they would here. But what an unfair way of getting away from an uncomfortable point that Miss Johnson does not dare ignore, but cannot answer—that society has benefited in a practical way. In fact every time Miss Johnson allows herself to become flippant, one can be fairly certain that she is trying to divert her reader's attention from thinking about a point she cannot answer or where her views might expose her prejudice. For instance, she takes another important point in the Arts Council Report, that the crime of publishing an obscene article at present is highly subjective and indefinable in advance, as everyone has a different idea of what is obscene, and that

> a man can at least know in his heart whether he is guilty of embezzling; he cannot possibly know whether he is guilty of depraving and corrupting.

The May issue of

Encounter

will be the 200th number

It will include

The Diary of Natalie Herzen

the first publication in the English language of the recently discovered Diary of the daughter of Alexander Herzen, in which she recounts her conspiratorial activities with famous Russian revolutionaries, especially Bakunin and Nechayev.

Also:

The Abuse of Psychiatry by Henry Miller

in which one of Britain's leading neurologists draws up a candid balance sheet of the virtues and vices of psychiatric practice.

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She then goes on to say:

> Oh, yes, he can. What about the combine of New York journalists who wrote (as a hoax) a novel to deliberately out-pornograph the pornographers?

He can *what*? Be *certain* that he is guilty of corrupting and depraving? Quite an assumption. She uses the same technique in dismissing comment on the Reverend David Sheppard, who was "not unscathed" by *Last Exit to Brooklyn* and who the Arts Council did not feel in any way harmed. She comments:

> A nice young man, you see, but an awkward one. In fact, we don't believe what he was saying. Sweep him under the carpet. More *Last Exits*, more David Sheppards. What could be more desirable?

The important question here concerns witnesses like Mr. Sheppard and Sir Basil Blackwell, the elderly bookseller and magistrate who claimed that his mind had been "defiled" by the same book. But Miss Johnson rushes on, straight into comments on the Moors murder case and the psychopath Brady, who certainly cannot be compared to any normal person with his police record of violence going back to days before he could read. It would be unfair to presume that Miss Johnson is begging one question, namely the effect of a book of accepted stature and moral commitment on a man in whom it created a self-awareness, in order to answer another question by talking of the effect of books on Brady, therefore giving the impression that the two effects were similar; but the suspicion did cross my mind.

Another Johnsonian flippancy emerges from the Arts Council's statement:

> Custom and acceptance are the great anti-aphrodisiacs. Nothing could be more antiseptic sexually than a nudist colony.

In other words the books will come to have as little effect as titillation. Fair enough. There are healthier, not to mention more enjoyable ways of getting sexual satisfaction. But Miss Johnson says:

> I gasp and stretch my eyes. So that is what the permissive society has been up to all along—to provide anti-aphrodisiacs. Could any project be duller?

Is Miss Johnson approving more aphrodisiacs? But no, it is another diversion from a serious point; and in her attacks on nudity in the theatre, the vulgar promotion of titillating entertainment, and of course, of the serious arts that use erotic material, she leaves little doubt where she stands. She claims that she is not with the Puritans wanting more censorship, but that she doesn't want any less either. Miss Johnson is wise enough to know that nothing ever stands still, and that if you do not advance, you must go back. The trouble is that Miss Johnson really wants to see a return to the pre-war world that one finds in her novels, and in those of Evelyn Waugh and Anthony Powell, where so much was kept under cover and permissiveness was all right for those inside the right circles but never to be allowed to the great unwashed outside it.

Society has changed and will change again, not back to the cosy middle-class paradise of 40 years ago, but forward, either to a violent society in which no value will be safe and no person, or if we tackle the problem of violence now with intelligent social engineering, possibly to a truly liberal and tolerant society that cares for everyone and their problems and gives every child a schooling for life that will enable him to understand the world intelligently, to live in it happily and play a full part in building that society. If we want the latter we must stop worrying about the symptoms of our disease, the violence that portrays society, and look at the disease itself, the causes of that violence. I think violence can be cured, but not if we allow ourselves to be diverted with prejudiced attacks on those much-needed reforms that will remove social frustrations—one of which should be the abolition of censorship—and pass off serious thinking with irrelevant jokes that by-pass the research that has already been done and the facts that are known.

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LETTERS

Mishan on Radical Reform

IF, IN REPLYING to my critics, I succeeded in ruffling Mr. Donald Tyerman's feelings [ENCOUNTER, February] more than I intended, I am sorry for it—though not as sorry, perhaps, as he would have me. But I would be much sorrier than that if, indeed, I had been guilty of "blackening the motives of those who do not go along" with me, and of using "innuendo and aspersion" instead of arguments. By (*1*) inadvertently moving phrases out of context, and (*2*) by misinterpreting the intended import of some sentences, Mr. Tyerman manages to cast me in a rather poor light. If I now take the liberty of showing these matters right way up, I would not have him infer that I impute to him any motives whatever. I would have him infer only that I believe he has, unintentionally, misunderstood mine.

1. Mr. Tyerman depicts me as "preening [myself] as an 'economic specialist' . . . while dismissing those who may oppose [me] as 'busybodies made eminent by . . . the present system'." What I certainly wrote, however, cannot, on an impartial reading, be made to yield this impression. First, I used the term "economic specialist" as a collective noun, prefixed by "The." I did not use it as a description of myself. Secondly, I used the term at the beginning of my reply, and in connection with an argument dealt with under 2 below. The sentence about "busybodies" came *two pages* later, and in connection only with the definition of a radical reform. And if the language was a trifle disdainful, it may be re-phrased in the attempt to meet Mr. Tyerman's impeccable standards; to wit, "the radical reform contemplated is one that will dispense with the services (which I deem unnecessary and, probably also, economically unwarrantable) of a number of persons made eminent through the operation of the existing university system." I cannot tell if Mr. Tyerman wishes to be counted as a member of this group. But whether or no, I was using the phrase merely to describe the fate of such people in my reformed university system. I did *not* apply it as a term of disapprobation to those who opposed my arguments.

2. I am, contrary to Mr. Tyerman's statement, very much concerned with "rational discussion." In evidence thereof, let me quote in full the few lines he has stigmatised as "yah-boo invective." I wrote: "Nor is it hard for me to appreciate that so uncompromising a treatment of a live political issue would be uncongenial to those who court a reputation for sound judgment and realism. This can always be earned by a conspicuous display of moderation in moving with the times, and by a care to suggest nothing that the public is not just about ready to accept anyway. Such 'political maturity' has its uses, but it has little to contribute to a radical reassessment of current social policies."

I am ready to confess that the passage has about it, perhaps, some unnecessary vivacity. But to see in it a "blackening" of motives bespeaks a hypersensitive nature. First of all, I was addressing my remarks not merely to Mr. Tyerman and Miss Maitland-Jones, but to readers as a whole. For I had received a large number of comments, both verbally and in writing, many of them to the effect that my proposals were quite unrealistic. I was irritated by some pontifical judgments about my conclusions without any attempt to meet the economic arguments, and I wished to make a sharp distinction between the role of the politician and that of the so-called expert.

I did not wish, for a moment, to imply that the politician's trade is an ignoble one, much less a superfluous one. In order to effect some measure of reform to meet changing circumstances, it is necessary to heed public opinion, to take account of conflicting views and interests, and, where necessary, make compromises. But, as an economist, I am only too conscious of the importance of the division of labour: and there are manifest disadvantages in the expert's practising the arts of the politician. I laid it down that the task of the specialist "is simply that of informing the public, unfolding the technical possibilities that are open to society and, so far as he can discern them, the range of consequences arising from their adoption."

I believe that such remarks could reasonably be interpreted as "rational discussion," though not necessarily of a high order. If there has to be a motive for deploying them early in my letter, it is the wish to explain and excuse my own "radicalism" by means of a *caveat* against the temptation that often besets experts, scholars, and thinkers—that of pitching their findings in a more moderate key in the hope of their being more politically effective, However imperceptibly these people start yielding to such a temptation, the country will, I surmised, "be the poorer for it if ideals that at first seem doomed to political extinction are resisted on that account."

Whether he agrees with my misgivings or not, I hope Mr. Tyerman will now appreciate that I conceive the issue of compromise and moderation versus a "radical reassessment," not in terms of personal integrity, but in terms of a proper division of labour.

May I end by recording my gratification on reading Mr. Tyerman's gracious and encouraging remarks on my "Spillover Enemy" article in the December ENCOUNTER.

E. J. MISHAN

London

Ken Russell's "Lawrence"

I HAVE JUST read John Weightman's "Trifling with the Dead" and agreed with a great deal of his appraisal of Ken Russell's film of "Women in Love."

However, when the critic accuses others of errors, as Weightman does when he states that Penelope

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"The Unperfect Society"

Belgrade

YUGOSLAV *authorities have put a ban on the import and dissemination of Mr. Milovan Djilas' latest book, "The Unperfect Society," which was published in the United States and West Germany some six months ago and which is soon to be published in Britain and France.*

A decree in the Official Gazette invoked article 72 of the Press Law and specified that the ban applied to all foreign editions as well as to all newspaper serialisation of the book. It did not give any reason as to why the book is regarded as harming the interests of the Yugoslav state.

Although the Yugoslav authorities could hardly have welcomed the publicity "The Unperfect Society" obtained abroad they did not react to it in the usual hasty fashion, and seemed decided to let the matter drop. Instead of vicious polemics, warnings and threats of judicial sanctions, as the authorities reacted when Mr. Djilas published his "New Class" in 1957, and "Conversations with Stalin," in 1962, the tactics were to refrain from any direct action against the author and from all direct polemics with his views.

The decision to ban the book in Yugoslavia six months after it appeared abroad suggests that there may have been some rethinking in high quarters which necessitated the belated ban. Mr. Djilas, who served over nine years in prison for the views expressed in his earlier books, now lives quietly in Belgrade, and does not seem unduly concerned by the decision. He does not regard the ban as a sign that official attitudes toward him personally are about to be changed.

Since his release from prison he has been given all opportunity to return to normal life. Although he is obviously not regarded as just another private citizen and his non-political novels are still denied publication in his own country, he has been given a passport and has, moreover, undertaken several trips abroad. The authorities appear to be reconciled to the publicity his visits aroused.

Lately, and especially since President Tito announced a tightening up of the ideological and cultural fronts, direct polemics with the views expounded by Mr. Djilas in his latest book began to appear and several prominent personalities challenged Mr. Djilas' conclusions that the communist world was living today in the twilight of ideology or that ideology was dead.

YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES *have now forbidden the distribution of the "International Herald Tribune" of 20 October, because it contained an article on the New Left written by him.*

Mr. Djilas said the article could not be regarded as offensive as it dealt exclusively with the general and philosophical problems of the New Left and not with concrete topics or with Yugoslav and East European affairs. Mr. Djilas can now only publish his novels and essays abroad.

Ever since President Tito called for stricter discipline, there has been a marked regression in almost all fields of national life. The press has gradually lost its fervour though it is still the freest press in any communist party. The staff of the two largest newspapers "Politika" and "Borba" have met recently to review their work in the light of President Tito's complaints. They concluded that there was room for improvement both in the ideological field and in the choice of staff.

It is, however, film workers and playwrights who are the main victims of the ideological squeeze. A play depicting the misfortunes of people caught in the events of Yugoslav feuds with Stalin was recently taken off the repertoire after two performances. President Tito had condemned the play and its author Mr. Dragoslav Mihajlovic for blackening the Yugoslav regime.

Such measures are evidently intended to tighten the cultural front. A special commission of the party Praesidium met recently to review the situation and decided that more must be done on the ideological front. A resolution said various phenomena in the ideological field today could not be simply explained by revisionism, Left or Right, or in such terms as "bourgeois liberalism." What must be done was to review every concrete situation and work out a policy so that the communists would know where they stood.

SATURDAY'S ISSUE *of "The Times" has been banned in Yugoslavia because it contained an article by Mr. Milovan Djilas, in which he assessed Lenin's work and legacy.*

The police visited all the news stands today 24 hours after the newspaper went on sale in Belgrade and confiscated all remaining copies on the grounds that the article was slanderous. Mr Djilas said later that the article contained criticisms similar to those expressed by numerous Yugoslav theoreticians, philosophers and sociologists in publications which had appeared here.

Mr. Djilas, who is still denied publication in his own country, said today that he was astonished by the official reaction to an article in which he expounded his personal views, particularly as Yugoslav Marxist publications abounded in criticism of Lenin's works. "I really do not know," he told me, "what I could write without its being automatically banned in my own country."

Six months ago the authorities asked Mr. Djilas to avoid concrete political topics. Since then he has taken great pains to avoid subjects on which he considers the regime to be sensitive.

"I ceased to write about concrete problems and avoided airing my opinions about Yugoslav problems or problems concerning Russia and the Soviet bloc," he said. "But I cannot renounce my theoretical work, even less my opinions. I would rather return to prison than renounce all activity of this kind."

DESSA TREVISAN *in* The Times

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Mortimer has forgotten the book, he ought to be above reproach himself.

The scene in which Gerald Crich kisses Gudrun against the wall used by the miners for their sweethearting may be "Filmland"; but it is Lawrence's. If Weightman looks again at pp. 322–325 of Heinemann's Phoenix edition of the novel he will find that this scene in the film keeps very closely to the text.

P. C. SAYLES

Langham, Rutland

I CAN'T AGREE that the scene keeps closely to the text. As I remember, in the film Crich and Gudrun are in conspicuous evening dress and a miner and his lass are standing a few yards away from them. This is what I find incredible. In the book, the episode is relatively acceptable and motivated. Gudrun wants to be kissed by Crich against this particular wall (1) to savour his power as boss in a location normally occupied by subordinates; (2) to enjoy his upperclass beauty, which contrasts with the gnarled physique of the miners. She gets her way, presumably because there is no one else under the arch at that moment. I can find no mention of other people, nor indeed of evening dress, in the book. In the film, the motivation, of course, remains unexpressed.

I would say that, in pre-1939 England, it was impossible for a gentleman to think of passionately embracing a woman in public, with working-class onlookers a few yards away; presumably, it was still less possible in pre-1914 England.

JOHN WEIGHTMAN

London

Chomsky as Zealot

By T. R. Fyvel

I CONFESS MYSELF puzzled by Noam Chomsky [ENCOUNTER, December 1969 and February 1970] and not just because when I disagreed with him recently on a point he denounced me as irrational, careless, and irresponsible. This happens rather rarely at my age but it may still be salutary. As one of those who between the wars and after tried to support various progressive causes (so often lost), I somehow feel that Professor Chomsky *ought* to be on my side. Like his talents, his humanism is beyond question; he has shrewd insight into Communist frauds; he says much on subjects like the Viet Nam war that one must agree with. Yet there he is instead, hurling denunciations at us like a Jewish Zealot out of Josephus, aiming at his allies while the armies of Vespasian advance.

My general impression after reading Professor Chomsky's book, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, was indeed that he considered the United States the most evil of societies, and American intellectuals who did not oppose it, therefore, as people to be utterly condemned. Now, Professor Chomsky may claim he makes no such unqualified statement or again that we are all merely stupid to gain this impression, but what he cannot say is that he did not create the impression. I say this the more because I think he is not always aware what impression his words will create in the reader.

He writes, for example: "By any objective standard, the United States has become the most aggressive power in the world, the greatest threat to peace, to national self-determination and to international cooperation." I doubt whether this sweeping proposition would find enthusiastic agreement in, say, Prague, or Tel Aviv, or even in Sinkiang. Offhand I would say our greatest current dangers to peace lie in the rigidities of Soviet foreign policy. I think the size of the Soviet armed forces on the Chinese frontier is frightening; I believe the Americans would gladly agree to an arms embargo for the Middle East and turn their backs on it but the Soviet Government will not; I believe Britain would have agreed to an embargo in the Nigerian war, but the Soviet Government would not; and so on. These differences are certainly controversial, but my point is that in the passage quoted Professor Chomsky does very much make the assertion which *R* says he does. So why is he so angry?

To be sure, Professor Chomsky follows this passage by informing us that the United States has freedom of speech and no gas chambers, etc., so that people are free to oppose evil American policies, etc.; but this is hardly news. And since it is not news, it also does not qualify his assertion that the United States is the greatest threat to human peace. So why does he not want this unqualified assertion to stand?

Again, when I argued elsewhere with Professor Chomsky's comparison of a proposal by one American professor that America should enforce changes in Chinese foreign policy by withholding surplus wheat with the Nazi plans for slaughtering Slavs, I don't think in retrospect that he fully understood my objection. The actual words of his which disturbed me were: "To maintain perspective, we should recall that even in his wildest remarks, Rosenberg [the Nazi leader] spoke of the elimination of 30 million Slavs, not the imposition of mass starvation on a quarter of humanity." I felt there was something appallingly insensitive in this passage, not only because such an analogy between a thoughtless remark in a Washington committee and the Nazi holocaust is absurd, but because I reacted to Professor Chomsky's ironical use of the

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phrase "to maintain perspective" much as when I walked out of the masochistic American musical, *Cabaret*. But it may well be that, in feeling, the gap between those who lived through the Nazi experience and those who came long after, like Professor Chomsky, grows steadily wider: and from his side, like ours, this is not easy to grasp.

Like *R*, I was also taken aback when Professor Chomsky described Japan of the military war lords as a "helpless" Asian country devastated by America. True, Professor Chomsky defends himself by saying he wrote "Japan *in 1945*." This he did, but I think the reason why he creates such a wrong impression is that he introduces American "devastation" as if it had been an act out of the blue, arising from sheer American wickedness, and not the climax of the savage wars of aggression waged by the Japanese war lords from 1931 onwards, which raises a decisively different problem: how not to respond to an attacking enemy in kind is not a specifically American, nor a new problem. As Nietzsche put it, "He who fights a dragon becomes a dragon himself." I recall how Liddell Hart wrote in the 1920s that an unprepared power attacked by an aggressor often ended up by hitting back even harder and more brutally. Or here is Orwell in 1938 (in a review of Koestler): "You cannot be objective about an aerial torpedo. And the horror we feel of these things has led to this conclusion: if someone drops a bomb on your mother, go and drop two bombs on his mother. . . ." For the alternative, said Orwell, was apparently to be enslaved by people less squeamish than yourself and no one had yet suggested a practicable way out. This dilemma can often indeed be terrible; the difference between Orwell and Chomsky here is that Orwell, being no Zealot but an English liberal, saw it as a common problem of humanity, rather than of one country like America, or of one group to be denounced. And talking of Hiroshima, I think Professor Chomsky might also have mentioned the American non-wickedness which helped it become the prosperous industrial town of today. He might say this was not his subject, but in his search to prove that America is the greatest threat to human peace, he might surely have viewed American policies as a whole.

In his chapter on the Cold War, Professor Chomsky chides the West for ignoring a Soviet note which, provided Germany did not join the Western alliance, offered German unification under "internationally supervised elections." Now, this diplomatic event took place during Stalin's last year, when he was described by Khrushchev as a completely merciless and capricious despot. Would "elections" have meant the same to Stalin as to the democratic West? Would "internationally supervised" have meant the same to him? Was Stalin really ready to have his favourite, Herr Ulbricht of East Germany, ditched by elections? If Professor Chomsky can believe all this, he is gullible indeed. (Whenever the Rusians wanted a conference for *results* rather than propaganda, as over the Austrian and Nuclear Test Ban Treaties, they had no difficulties at all in getting negotiations going.) But anyway, Professor Chomsky should surely have at least *asked* such sceptical questions. I am ill at ease with amateurish political writings which take words like "internationally supervised elections" as meaningful.

In his Spanish Civil War chapter, which is really a tremendously long and involved attack upon Professor Gabriel Jackson's book on Spain (which I think a very good and reasonable study) I would go some way with Chomsky's view that the Spanish Anarchists have probably not been given quite their due as against the Communist-Liberal Republican government in Madrid, though I disagree strongly with his estimate of their efficiency. Since I well remember the publication of Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, I was also pleased to see Professor Chomsky quote long chunks of it, but I was again baffled when he said it was largely ignored because it conflicted (in England, not Spain) with "established liberal dogma." "*Liberal*"? Good heavens, Orwell himself was a liberal with a strong anarchist streak, just as I in my way was a liberal with a bourgeois streak. If what Professor Chomsky means is that in 1938 the Communists and their fellow-travellers dominated the Left Book Club and the publishing house of Gollancz and had too much say on the *New Statesman* and *News Chronicle* and so on, why does he not *say* so?

After all, Orwell said this, we all said it, the English intellectual world of the time was so small one knew exactly who under Communist influence wrote what editorial and who had left the Communists and when. I remember many talks with Fredric Warburg, Orwell's publisher and mine, where we bemoaned surrounding Communist influence, but I am sure we never once used Chomsky's word "*liberal*" because, dammit, Orwell's stress on common decency, etc., was surely itself that of a liberal. And I am just as sure that Orwell would have hated being used by one American professor as a bludgeon against another American professor.

Lest it be thought I am just quibbling over an earlier English as against a later, esoteric American use of the word "liberal," let me give an analogy. I agree with Professor Chomsky that Communist propaganda in 1938 steadily maligned the Spanish Anarchists and POUM and that credulous people (mostly Socialists) were taken in by this, just as I think the huge Communist propaganda apparatus steadily maligns Israel today, with support from the credulous. I have just been shown a collection of New Left publications on Israel, in many of which the Communist slanders were repeated almost verbatim. Should one therefore denounce the New Left of today as "liberal"? And, talking of Israel, I was again startled by Professor Chomsky when, in discussing the Anarchist peasant collectives in Spain, he says their possibilities of success were illustrated by "the Palestinian experience." If this refers to the Jewish kibbutzim in Israel, why not say so? Technically, of course, there was no Israel at the time, only Palestine; but since "Palestinian" today generally means "Palestine Arab," what non-specialist would know what Professor Chomsky means by this emphatic non-use of the words "Jewish" and "kibbutz"?

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London

A PLEA *for funds for a research enterprise to achieve for English grammar what the Oxford Dictionary achieved for English vocabulary, is made today in the British Council's annual report. The Survey of Modern English Usage at University College, London, is about to move into its tenth year, leaving a wake of monographs. In its report on English as "the most widely used language in the world," the council says that the outstanding research requirement is support of the survey. "Dr. Johnson employed more assistants on his dictionary than this survey has been able to afford."*

Professor Randolph Quirk, who is conducting the survey, rejects prescriptions for a perfect language and scrupulous indices of what cannot be said. Basically the survey seeks to describe English as spoken and written today by university-educated native speakers (the definition embraces the United States and much of the Commonwealth). It will prescribe only "by implication."

"When we find a form of English used by novelists, say, or judges for formal purposes, we will say that this is the preferred version."

For the first time spoken English will be extensively used for the description of grammar. It is carefully indexed into categories, such as spontaneous speech, telephone speech, speech between intimates, equals, disparates and so on. For the layman, an important aspect will be the identification of the range of variants that makes some constructions so uncertain.

One is the past tense of "dare not answer." Of 76 volunteers 48 used "didn't dare to answer," 13 used "didn't dare answer," eight used "dared not answer," five used "dare not answer," one "wouldn't dare to answer," and one "dared not to answer."

Most of us, it seems, like Molière's M. Jourdain who found that he had been talking prose all his life, will find that we have been talking grammar. THE TIMES

London

THIRTY YEARS AGO, *at the outbreak of World War II, I was considered [writes Gordon Brook-Shepherd] something of an eccentric for having already travelled and studied so much abroad that I could speak fluent German with, if anything, a Dutch accent and fluent French with, if anything, a Belgian one. In those days, if you demeaned yourself by learning foreign languages at all, you were at least expected to preserve the basic decencies of the Raj by speaking them like an unmistakable Englishman.*

But today the young not only have no such inhibitions about languages; they also have a new language of their own—the language of mini-skirts, drugs, long hair, beads, bangles and —above all—pop music. In the last year or two I have seen my own children in countries like Spain, Portugal, Italy or Greece, where they barely spoke a word of the language, instantly communicate with the local teenagers through the new lingua franca of the L.P. record. The other languages they happened to have in common seemed almost secondary. It is the common culture of youth that is breaking down Europe's boundaries, not any common tongue; and I am convinced it is the one thing that in time will trample down the Iron Curtain, let alone swim the Channel.

It is not unfitting that music should be its banner. More than two centuries ago, Western Europe was *united, in Bach's classical suites, which began with a German* Allemand, *continued with a French or Italian* courant, *moved on to a Spanish* sarabande *and ended with the English, Scottish or Irish* gigue. *Perhaps the electric guitar of today can carry on where the harpsichord fell silent. And perhaps the British* gigue *will then no longer be, as the musicologists of old described it, "a sort of merry limp coming in at the end."* SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

"FOLKS" [*E. E. Rosenthal writes*] *is used daily by Americans west of the Hudson River, and sometimes even in New York. "Hi, folks" is a common welcome not only in Oshkosh, Peoria, and Walla Walla but among sophisticates of the big cities. If an American uses such a welcome in this country I hope Britons will not believe that he is pirating a phrase from strip cartoons.*

On the other hand, the "this is it" phrase, which originated among United States Air Force personnel just before a combat mission in Second World War, is fast fading from the living American language. THE TIMES

I DOUBT [*writes T. F. Higham, of Trinity College, Oxford*] *whether the United States Air Force in the Second World War "originated" the phrase "this is it" as stated by Mr. Rosenthal, though they may well have made it popular.*

Early in this century, when ancient Greek was more widely studied than now, the phrase had some little currency. It exactly translates a colloquial idiom τοῦτ' ἐκεῖνο *found in two of the most frequently read comedies of Aristophanes, The Birds and The Frogs. In its simplest form it is used when something previously spoken of or foreboded has come to pass, as in Birds 354 and Frogs 318, 1342. Professor W. B. Stanford in his commentary on the Frogs, first published in 1958, translates 318 by "this is it" and 1342 by "that's it." In 1908 this latter expression was used also by Gilbert Murray (vs. 318): but I have not found the exact form "this is it" in any translation prior to Stanford's. Very likely the United States Air Force had by then made its use more natural.*

I myself, when lecturing on Aristophanes in the 'twenties, sometimes illustrated the idiom by a story brought from British India over 60 years ago. It told of a bishop who lived in great fear of a paralytic stroke and was constantly pinching one leg or the other to test their sensitivity. Once when dining out in formal episcopal dress he alarmed the company by struggling to rise from the table and saying tragically "This is it! All feeling's gone." But it was not his own leg he had been pinching— as was explained, with some asperity, by the lady on his right. THE TIMES

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I HAVE PROBABLY SPENT too much time over these details because the reason why I find it harder than I should wish to be nice to Professor Chomsky is more basic. In reading his book I was given a curious feeling of an impatient and unremitting hostility towards myself—not personally, but as it were against all those of my generation and outlook, who grew up as schoolboys with the pacifist ideas of Barbusse, Liddell Hart and Erich Maria Remarque, and then, as a chaotic history engulfed us, tried to react intellectually as best we could. With a few exceptions like Orwell, it seems as if for Professor Chomsky we are all tainted by the seven-letter word "liberal" and therefore imperiously to be swept off the stage. But suppose we don't want to be swept off? Ah, here's the rub. As I read Professor Chomsky's replies I was troubled. "Malicious lies . . . false and irresponsible allegations . . . remarkable distortions . . . neither the courtesy nor the honesty . . . earlier fabrication . . . new series of falsehoods. . . ." This is a Zealot's language rather than argument. As a European observer I would make what may seem a naive suggestion. If Professor Chomsky so desperately wants to convert other American intellectuals to his way of thinking on issues like Viet Nam,

"Intellectuals"

New York City

ALTHOUGH *Vice-President Spiro T. Agnew seems to relish the role of spokesman for unorganised lowbrows against the Eastern intelligentsia, certain passages in his Montgomery, Alabama, speech invite reflective reconsideration of this portrait. They at least raise the suspicion that Mr. Agnew is himself an "in" intellectual masquerading as the voice of the unbrainwashed multitudes.*

The sections of the address most worthy of curiosity have inexplicably stirred little general notice, and were indeed received in deadly silence by his otherwise responsive audiences. In swift succession he quoted from the published works of Dr. Sidney Hook, Arnold Beichman, Walter Laqueur, George Kennan and Irving Kristol. That none of these names elicited any audible shock of recognition from the pillars of the Alabama Chamber of Commerce and their wives seemed apparent; there was not even a polite patter of applause as he read from their essays.

But Agnew, identifying himself with critiques of the New York Left they have published in such journals as "Commentary" and the London-edited magazine ENCOUNTER, *betrayed no self-consciousness in introducing them. He treated their names as if they were, one might say, as much household words as Tom Seaver or the Rev. Billy Graham.*

IT IS SCARCELY SUGGESTED *that these men were anonymous nondescripts discovered by the Vice-President. In varying degrees each has long occupied a place of prominence in what must be called our intellectual world, and beyond; Kennan's distinguished diplomatic service spanned many years and Hook has been a spirited polemicist as well as philosopher for decades.*

But the Vice-President's glib use of all of them, and his easy recital of excerpts from their works (each of them critical of the methods of the New Left), surely warranted larger exploration. Significantly, he avoided any positive identifications; he offered the cryptic negative comment that "these are not names drawn at random from the letterhead of an Agnew-for-Vice-President Committee" and added rather intimately: "Those are men more eloquent and erudite than I, and they raise questions that I've tried to answer."

In stereotyped studies of Agnew too many have visualised him gulping the editorial page of "The Daily News" as his spiritual stimulant, and possibly in moments of intensely self-disciplined meditation pondering Bill Buckley's "National Review." Now a wholly different image emerges.

ONE CAN ALMOST HEAR *Agnew upbraiding his secretary as he views the reading matter put before him on a recent morning:*

"Miss Jones, where, may I ask, is the new issue of 'Dissent'? I know it's out because I saw Pat Moynihan carrying a copy down Pennsylvania Avenue yesterday."

"'Dissent'?" Miss Jones asks plaintively.

"Yes, how many times must I remind you? It's that lively magazine run by Irving Howe. And I'm told it has an article by Howe called 'The Agony of the Campus' as well as a first-rate piece by Michael Walzer called 'Corporate Authority and Civil Disobedience.'"

"Oh, yes, I remember the magazine. Our deliveries seem to be getting worse on all those publications."

"Damn that Blount. I wish the Postmaster would spend more time on his job and leave Vietnam to me . . . I mean, of course, to me and the President. It seems like weeks since I've seen 'Partisan Review' or ENCOUNTER."

"I have a copy of this week's 'New Republic'."

"Read it last night in the bath. But somebody swiped my London 'Economist.' I suspect the maid. . . . Have we had much mail about those quotations from Kristol, Beichman and the rest?"

"We've had a few postcards asking for more information about them. Usually misspelled their names."

"My God, people don't read much, do they?"

"We have also had a lot of crank notes asking about your quotation from William Lloyd Garrison. They seemed to think he was a radical."

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might he not find them being nicer to him if he were simply nicer to them? Isn't his vehemence counterproductive? Concerning this vehemence, let me as advice quote him the title given back in 1881 in the Ukraine to a remarkable essay by a great-uncle of mine; true, he was a "liberal," but he was also no mean Jewish intellectual and wanted to influence a whole generation of another period. His title was telling—and doubtless Noam Chomsky will get the reference: "*Lo zuh ha-derekh*—Not this is the way!..."

T. R. FYVEL

London

"I was afraid I wouldn't get away with that. But it got a big hand in Montgomery."
***James Wechsler in the* NEW YORK POST**

THE FOLLOWING LETTER *was sent to the New York "Times," but never published:*

It would be most unfortunate if the Vice-President's approving reference to "Commentary" in his speech of November 20 were taken as implying that the magazine is in agreement with the general line of attack on the news media which Mr. Agnew appears to be pursuing. Moreover, by quoting Walter Laqueur's "Commentary" article ("Reflections on Youth Movements," June 1969) out of context the Vice-President made it appear that Mr. Laqueur was entirely hostile to the student movement of today, whereas in fact the article's tone was distinguished by a quality of critical sympathy and a complexity of political judgment altogether foreign to the spirit of Mr. Agnew's own remarks about the radical young.

NORMAN PODHORETZ
Editor, Commentary

THE FOLLOWING LETTER *was not only never published but never sent, or even written:*

It would be shortsighted for anybody to conclude that Vice-President Agnew's quotations from the articles by Arnold Beichman and Professor Sidney Hook in ENCOUNTER *were a faithful reflection of the original context. The Vice-President, in referring to America's need for intricate intellectual exploration of social issues, may have made it seem that Professor Hook's and Mr. Beichman's impassioned indictments were some namby-pamby exercises in complexity, whereas in fact the whole tone of their articles was informed by their sense of outrage at the rise of illiberalism, irrationalism, and violence. It was two American writers' direct and undiluted expression of democratic indignation, altogether foreign to the spirit of methodological timidity and philosophical hesitation which Vice-President Agnew apparently thinks characteristic of what he calls the effete intellectual class.*

ENCOUNTER

AUTHORS

John McGahern was born in Dublin in 1934, and brought up in the West of Ireland. He took a degree at University College, Dublin, and lived in the city until 1964 when he was awarded a Macauley Fellowship. He now lives in Paris. His novels, *The Barracks* (1963) and *The Dark* (1965), were published by Faber & Faber who will later this year be bringing out *Night Lines*, a volume of short stories in which "Wheels" will be included....

Sidney Hook's article was originally presented at the 50th Anniversary Conference of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace in the Symposium on "Peaceful Change in Modern Society" (Stanford University, California). Professor Hook teaches philosophy at New York University and is the author of many books, including *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* (1933), *John Dewey: An Intellectual Portrait* (1939), *Political Power and Personal Freedom* (1959), *The Quest for Being* (1961), *From Hegel to Marx* (rev. ed. 1962), *Academic Freedom & Academic Anarchy* (1970). His long essay on "Marxism in the Western World" was published in 1965 as an ENCOUNTER pamphlet and is still available (3s. 6d.)....

Irving Howe is editor of the socialist monthly review, *Dissent*, and Professor of Literature at Hunter College in New York City. He writes: "...The quoted passages from *Germinal* are taken from a new translation of the novel by Stanley and Eleanor Hochman, to be published later this year by the New American Library in New York. My essay was written as an introduction to this new translation...."

David Mowat (born 1943) read English at New College, Oxford, and then spent two years in Shakespearean research at the University of Sussex, where he directed several theatre productions. He is currently working on writers' projects with the Stables Theatre Club in Manchester. His *Anna Lusa and other plays* will shortly be published by Calder and Boyars....

Paul Fussell, who is at present living in London, is Professor of English at Rutgers University. Among his books are *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (1965) and *The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism: Ethics and Imagery from Swift to Burke* (Oxford University Press, 1965; recently re-issued in paperback). In previous contributions to ENCOUNTER he has written about Nabokov (April 1966) and Boswell (May 1967)....

Frank Tuohy's "A War of Liberation," which appeared in the March issue of ENCOUNTER, will be included in his collection of short stories, *Fingers in the Door*, to be published by Macmillan in May....

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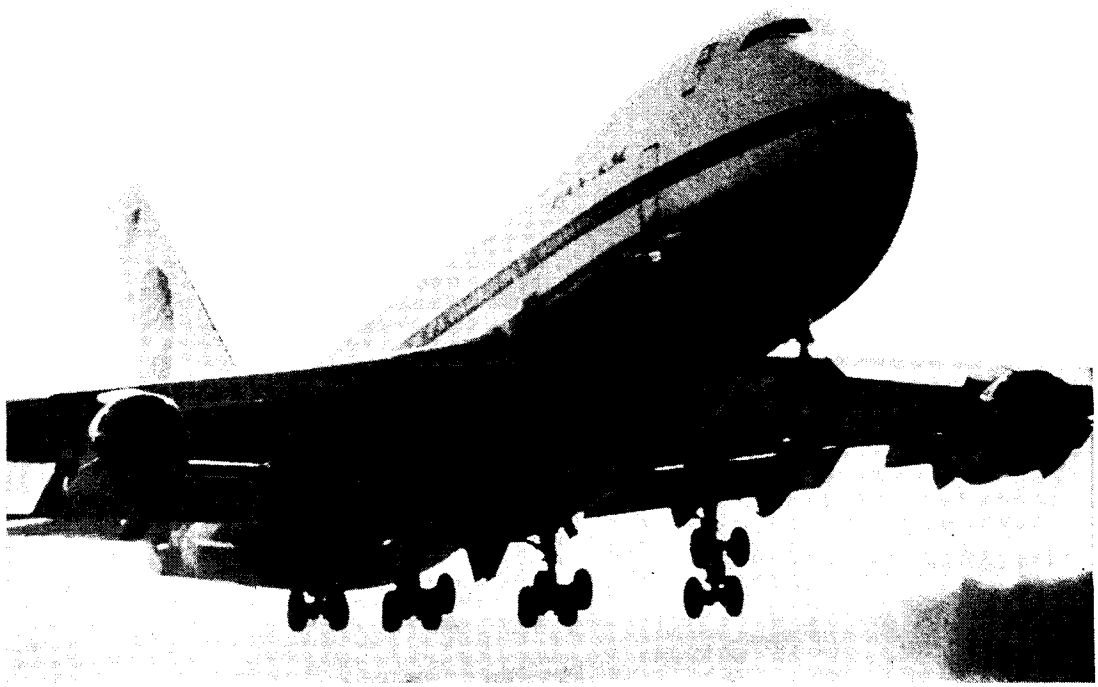

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